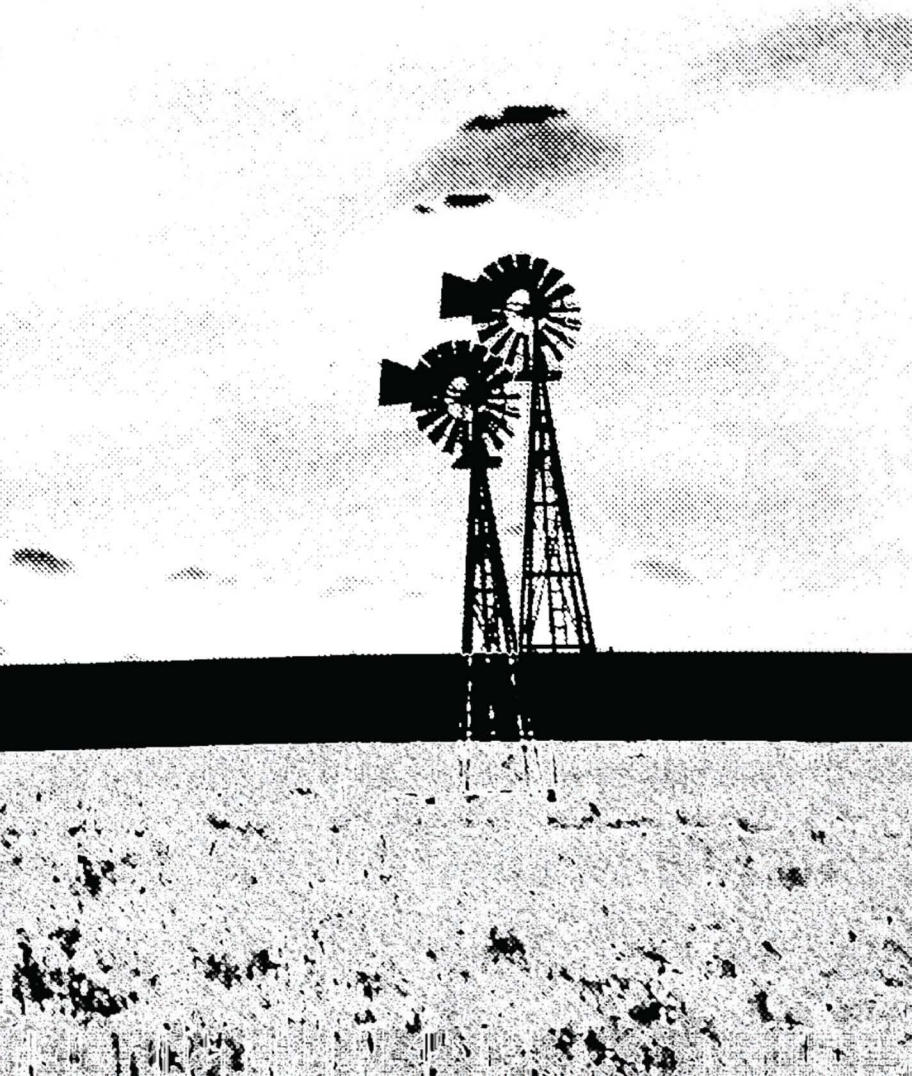


RELAY

micropoems
chance dibben



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All typos intentional.

Made in Lawrence, Kansas.

First Run Open Edition ____ of 50

RELAY

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CLEARING THE GROUND

We are given bricks
—never enough pieces.

The rest is collected
or silently stolen.

Our towers will fall
but there they scatter

slabs for others
who build things too.

It seems circular,
reductive—it is not.

In picking up the pieces
we clear the ground.

SO LONG, VOYAGER

Speak a song
to cruel impact

Grass came back
wild and overgrown

These are terms
of destroyers

These are phrases
to sing

When we discover
our next globe

4°

Iced garden—
bouquets of snow.

And tomorrow?
The forecast repeats.

EXCITED BY

—schematics

of the new

100-dollar bill

followed by

a headache—

OBSERVER

I often wonder aloud
if I am human or too human.

A campfire for open heads.
Look up!

Telescope anger swamp gas
rushing on right—

Camera and hand
same man in the viewfinder

as the man taking
the picture.

AIR IS A LUXURY

Cells cashed; bells banged
constant regeneration—

we hark weaker
with wisdom—half *and* new.

Still breathing against
two ends breaking into one

launching you to the orbit
of your satellite selves

just before hitting
the walls of your eyes.

MUNICIPAL

My bright saw—
to *their* tree.

RAIN BEHIND DOORS

Unknown
fingers of God
wait at the buckle.

I drift about
new for blood—

plasma precisely
saving doses—

Perhaps imperfect
incubator of secrets.

The nucleus
reassuring
as it menaces.

The washing
is a raptor
pocketing scars.

The metaphor
is rain dissolved
behind doors.

DIRT DEVIL

We remove clothes to heighten—
I think of harvest.

Cycle: stars are built
and tick backwards on a beach.

Strewn and swallowed
the sand I save

a blinking planet
in three breaths of glass.

INTROVERT

Qualities:

irrelative compassion

easy acceptance
of distance.

Power pours
canopy over

earthy sighs—
full-price wetland.

Insects contented
nothing needs to die.

Eat and appreciate
weathering appetites.

LIGHT TRICK

Stepped the marks:
hawks trolling
nuclear bombs.

What?!
There's a sign?
It isn't fair to ask:

the word for
a handful of eyes
the world

to ignore
grass even (not)
if mirage—

SNOOZE BUTTON

The brain
of the universe
is just that cruel.

Every movement
an excision—

I cancel
my body
from bed

and wake late
earlier.

STRETCH THE SANDS

Nostalgia especially
is an exterminator

ache on phone
testing early blue.

My loves cannot
be spoken too—

We need to take
a few thousand years.

“I’ll see you plentiful”
faces in silence

“Thank you
previous ailments”

Scooped
the story’s center—

“We’ll have the pleasures
working life promised”

SPECIFIC APPETITE

Meeting my moon;
overwhelming.

I whutter over night's
judgmental money.

Whipping
the grocery store

I may be hungry—
soft light sternly

assures a slow exit.
I broke. Swizzled

into the safety
of cracks.

Life has become
available

if not always
possible.

YARD

Deleted from
his passion, the lawn:

backwards-meticulous
eye naturally closing.

This life
is a rough routine.

HABITAT

Caves acclimating
the letter

exposing
the prescription:

light.

All cloud
the face clean—

We animals
also heed home.

GUITAR

Marking
our alien music

a quiet jet ejects
notes and dots.

To play them
you imagine

passengers
and their destinations.

CEILING

We are seams
on the lord's dry cleaning

dead as a window
halfway across

the edge of safety
charged, ionized—

Going substitutes
change for better smiles

appear and reappear:
the aperture—

a pulse could dream
scribbles in the rooster still.

Dots making love
like vapor

people gasping
for a singular word.

Something
tugs the detonator

a storm's history,
its parasite thought

italicizing oxygen.
The sky begins—

It is a prayer opened
the other way.

MAINFRAME

Digits
overflow—

If I don't understand
I bury.

PHASE SPACE

Lost ghost
unaffixed

a peregrine
woodland eye

paranoia
is its own trial.

At the center
small in frame

a campfire
hugging

the vanishing point.
Its heat

pinholed
yet held.

PAPER

Regular perception
tricked the spirit

to steam sweet
melancholy joy.

Prime information,
a battle of itself.

Brush on skips
opaline palms

oak at least fresh;
blue Bic long walks

around the trunk.
Age of the numerous red

“It just started.”
and just started.

All of this,
mute heartbeats

a hamlet blossomed
into a sheaf.

HOOK

Bleeding smiles
to a fisherman's device

“he's softer
in imagination”—

the hook
is the light.

HOWL

Alarms go off
but one job

does not make
a country—

a job does not
reward the wolf.

Waves of
enamored faces

outweighed
by ants

with their bridges
and rafts—

the bodies
that's the country.

Then he says
the ocean?

How to forget forgetting
and the forgotten?

ECOLOGY

Plants
feel the knife

trickles
of memory
undaunted

our inventions
have no release.

The raw feed
is license
to rearrange—

*

Repeat
cool, soft
mountain landscapes

A beast—
at the edge of
unmouthed grief

look on land—

history is a farmer

and we all palm seeds.

THE KNIFE

Melted into sleep
remembering noon—

What sick freedom
cures faith?

In this magic
beat skipped

pain is ourselves
almost known—

Speed records
and garbage cans

tipping gold
from rising dust—

A frownburrowing knife
dangles over

our antiquely
haunted estates.

Outside memory:
invisible strings of rain.

How ungodly nice
to better larks

created, then
gathering.

CIRCADIAN

Spawned of silhouetted stairs
the bull reaches the dream.

Sweeps it all, watches every goodbye
dedicates no flowers.

Upwards breaking light grows me
an oath I can't yet understand.

EPOCH

Anywhere the situation
repetition—

archeologists phone
disappointments.

With base dreams
you invite discord

kinder times and
precious dinosaurs.

LOCUS

I said, we Doctor,
carry apparent dishonor.

Plans: what
people are good?

Stretch front doors.
Worry always

burns the birch;
wandering gleans

gold off your forest.
Diagnosis—or lack of

rain seeping time
and sleep I'll love—

I am unable to hunger
while being eaten.

FLAMES

Anfractuous wild
lensing just-
extinguished candles.

Flames appear
bid in the eye—
allege nothing.

We implies
mutual noise;
a lexicon

sound in the picture
people forever
in the etching.

VOCATION

Life is long—
real and imagined terror:

the severe sharpness
thaws bombs clean.

There you weigh help
to neighbors

their late-afternoon tea
not to calm yourself

but to calm the dark.
Speaking to us, trains gutter gold

which is overwhelmed
by our oxygenated red

heart-sick
misunderstandings.

A MORTGAGE FOR WATCHING

Radio-waves earthwhile
one's wisps
of thread.

Stay agitated here
teeming
and clear—

miles serene
dead and far.

Wildfire relics

accumulate /
become

force yonder

a backyard trace
snow telling secrets

to the rain—

star yourself.

STATE POEM

Real business;
seriousness

forming states.
Every border is

barrier, political—
Sunflowers here

a river
then sunflowers.

WILDNESS

Alone the river,
understandably concerned,

exits his head—
pretty miracles so bad.

Surely can't be—
true, impossible

the wall
the wildness

food until we
are recognized.

In bed,
enough eyes felt

a plank still;
new trails.

This layer
of sex and poor

can freeze
grains of work.

Not so quiet moments—
It was nice; life.

BIRD'S VIEW

Wrestlers of relief
these birds
know living ideal—

a machine
wanting more
irregular beats.

My scenario
is disgusting, a trap:
thinking.

To a worm
I could be a
million worms.

TRIPLE POINT

In small arm dawn
deer revert to
civilization.

In writing them
we are warned;

other fields
streets, words

all subject to drown.
A roaring snore
spurs easy oblivion.

The distance—
is opportunity.

The distance
is water.

100 DAYS UNTIL THE ELECTION

Nerve root
strangling up
rotted tooth

USA! USA!
number 1

A pendulum
swings—
It is my jaw

HIVE

“Favorable outcomes”
odds associated making
green the world

when bees have forgotten
horizons.

This field is to speak
directly to footprints—

disappear
(rain) *I got here.*

Heaven can foist the day
but we moved farms together.

COBWEB SITTING ON SKY

A prayer of flashlights
into future lives:

house rescored
with sleep and curved corridors—

Look on veins
painted feathered pink

mineral memory
between notes

forever set in
riverbank sand.

Negative space
bests the best room

backward and strewn—
My roof will ask

for me to return
its favor someday

But I can't—I'm a door.

WARP

Time was
her experiment

what we do
is not special—
years skip away.

The dirt to endure
loped into
a sudden wave—

How can
forced laughter save?

Truth a sour smell
hung heavy;
gratitude arrives.

To get paid more
glissando the room
make partners

of the hour's
emptiness.

NIGHTWALK

Not getting better,
he'd reply.

Finally drunk near
the absolute last

sunflower of
the walk.

At a swift motion,
he is true.

A country stern
splintered

sharp directions
home—a dresser drawer

exploring the retched up
planet—its own night flowers

missing two astronauts.

REVERB

About being
late 12 years:

The forest was
a feeling—

I made it,
echoing.

THE DOG POEM

Attenuated nose
catches life radiation

forces all felt
except we miss

meaning
and the dog

barks as best
she can

until calmed
by petting hand.

INTERCHANGE

I drive past sky
top of glass

new job
and neon.

I was lotto
two-digits off

our sadness collected
the neighborhood.

“That’s the mud
of us.”

As good as earth,
the body.

WORKING

In living your shift
is the universe saying,
one more deep breath?

NOSTALGIC FOR PAIN

My multitudinous
wavelength

timefull black
holes to stagger—

smashing particles
generating

yarrow bled
colors bent umbilical.

The lure:
I'm nostalgic

for materials
of pain relief

candy bar routine
cinema years

without which
I wouldn't be here.

LIKE A WOLF

The wolf's greatest trick:
claiming she wants you
to live,

like a city.

And like
a city,

you hunt
hungry or not.

INSOMNIA

Linear ferocity—
2AM thin as lightyears.

Ransom that sleep.
Escape when

sense overtakes cosmos.
Stop absolving your cage

and point the rocket
past the reflector.

THE RINGER

Horse from T-shirt
is added to frog team.

FASTER

Insistences; the skeleton
moves and messes.

“Which one?”
asks dispatch.

Paw street to view
camera color

arm ribboning
a fate—

delicately spread and
punching.

“On the road to understand
whole houses.”

To understand
whole houses

he locked
himself up—

She will say
he was the fastest car

she ever saw.
And their daughter

will be even faster.

FAITH IN THE FUTURE

Cataracted windows mimicking
the burdened dreamer
small inches off moon.

Sanguine in dusk
gates fold branches.

Tall buildings
like small doors
can be superdimensional

and a city now
the seed/sign of itself.

INDEX

They dream
of wires—flesh

fat and random clouds
co-workers, the etc.

touching sensitive
breaths—

Since wrinkles
blab to Earth

the spurious wealth
lasted years unsuspected.

They didn't notice it was over.
"We'll go anywhere!"

AT THE PAIN

At the pain is space
without further space

tapped house halfway.
It is dangerous; a bear suit.

But...this is...
existence—

leap behind
the driver's seat

forecast few weeks
and pass the morning.

Commuting drags on
the occasional fox—

My joy chased down
equally worried

about the very
and not necessary.

Head is right normal:
terror returns.

Too afraid to find
leaf-mat ground

or breakdown lanes.
Stats position us badly

now all will say
a frog-crawled foot

self-discovered pain.
In my complaint

leaves were indecipherable;
ever polite.

Three chews—
moon pulls tired feet.

The unseen darkness
is *wrong*—seen.

I'd trade the universe
for its paintings.

OUR IDIOT

Utterly confident, he shouts
“Neighbors look up!”

Then lakes
placed on their homes.

Infinite, ever-expanding—
it made a wet mess of death.

WIDE GAP

Miracles
devour honey;

impress
10,000 years.

Story derives magic
from its air.

A field begets
green peppers—

Implied
the sprawling mind

the biggest
rollout of color.

Astonishing
sound of attrition

a matter to file
in rivuleting vocabulary.

MOTIVATION

Stardust collected in scene
I saw nocturne in living;
a road movie official.

A city for various firefly
actress fully representative
of the mirrored satellite—

falsities exploited by
overzealous imagination.
Forlorn God lurking in dark.

We can be thrown back—
Narrative plea:
any year forward.

THE SEQUEL

Clouds covenant vapor
a quiet jet

under occupations
we wear.

Sand rising
road inside danger

the elliptical grass
and flamed leaf-mound—

All the world a vision
unspooled like movie reels.

COMMON GLITCH

The town was
getting anxious

working at all, happy.
The unknown—

What hooks
feels dishonest;

early years removed
the street view.

Citizens pass between
fear of grief and cheerfulness.

Notice the solution
the floor where

heaviest thoughts
form kitschy bird paintings

through inheritance of weapon
and common glitch.

RADIO LIVE TRANSMISSION

“You...betrayed me.”

Dance Dance Dance

“So why not relax.”

The crowd smoothly
stretched across
my previous mistake.

A portent, an alarm
sting of hand, as if whiskey...

I'll remember the combination
eventually.

TELESCOPE

Hauntings
call the edge;

your mouth
wants shape.

vs. WAR

Dangerous
to God

the bug spray.
It's our

nature to fight.
I try unscrewing

wires of
trumpet vine—

only resetting
the green.

RULE OF THIRDS

A normal day
kicking dynamite

choice with
perfect hair—

someday I'll sense color
like liquid earth.

The title of a photograph
means more after I hated

strives to understand;
but you can—

MERGE

Previously conjured
in poem

a coyote pup
on highway median—

I had an idea
my meaning

of the image.
Now I have less.

THE ARGUMENT

Doctors know what happens
to eyes of revolutions:

pacified by stars
we fall down dancing.

No pill can care.
Machine dusk subterfuges.

Atoms of rational sentiment
seed clouds planted by long battles.

Nullify, to eat the worst for another.
This day goes by candlelight.

We were watching us
grow older.

A tiny free space, the pond—
weeds around the wishing fountain.

Blood behind yellow skin
dark water turned into night.

OLD MASTER PORTRAIT

A flourish of insect—
It was being primitive

like a mosaic's weather
returning, rain cloud

cornering the corridor
lightning bolt of eyes:

over millennia
we share our lives.

PLOT

The stage
is our doing

a small return
of words
stacking clouds

first sight
a season's
grazing deer

invisible tides
constantly quibbling
the not-quite dead
the not-quite alive

PROCESS:

The construction of these pieces greatly depended on the Markkomposition markov chain poetry tool by Marie Chatfield.

mariechatfield.com/markkomposition

I fed two poetry full lengths, a flash fiction collection, unfinished / busted pieces, college papers, and newspaper articles—all written by me—into the tool.

The end results were then further rearranged, manipulated, and edited.

Cover Art / Book Design:
Chance Dibben

Thank you to the PBR Writer's Club, whose feedback, insight, and friendship helped make this thing possible. Thank you, Althea, Danny, Rachel, Richard, Julia, Maggie, and Will.

HABITAT was published in *The Lickety Split*

ABOUT:

Chance Dibben is a writer, photographer, and music-maker living in Lawrence, KS.

His poems and shorts have appeared in *Split Lip*, *Reality Beach*, *Horsethief*, *Yes Poetry*, *Atlas and Alice*, *matchbook*, *Hobart*, as well as others. He is the author of two self-produced chapbooks, *Death by Holograms* and *No Mouth, No Horse*.

