

**from Dead Letters**

Dear X

The faux intimacy of the you. Insistent, that thin line of saliva during sleep. As if you were a doctor, blotting this descent with writing paper or sand.

Arcade or slaughterhouse dream?

The alms of the night dole out a riddle. Sadistic in origin,  
The word passes sentence, up and over, swallows chronology.  
Rising from sandbox, the dreamer takes account of the middle window, pulls at the handle, three in the back two in the head.

Dear X

You must have known she'd miss the train, forget  
to look at lit up signal. Hair slicked back, narrow  
pied-de-poule skirt, not yet the noir cliché of punk.

I suspect lapping hierarchy, a long take subject to proxies.

On the prowl underground ripped out of my mind:  
you hold the plain cup of denunciation like a glossy  
proof or blowup. In truth you've scanned the wrong text again.

*Les colmateuses du système* (ideological sealers).  
Sewer rats and talking heads, the revenge fantasy that slam  
dancing grants us, pinning those bitches against the frame.

Dear X

Give it to me! To sing blackmail squeal, *Die Sprache der Mutter*, under the law of repetition, foreign and blind to itself like a fake coin in beggar's hand. Make yourself ugly, you say, so men on the street won't ---. I palm off the rest, not in the mouth and counting to a hundred.

The viola of habit sounds its blue note, two of a kind, barring the self. Intact milk factory.

There is no end to small talk in the wee hours.

Dear X

Hold on! Let's talk about the one who goes out at night. A ritual of sorts. In my dream I push the envelope of captivity as if I'd written it myself: "Dear X, don't let this informal address trump you..."

Why is it you've dressed this compound sentence for discredit? Have you forgotten restrictions on trains and buses are on the rise? A better subtitle would stray from browbeating the reader.

Precisely. When yellow and white stripes fan out in the distance, I boot up: like in a flipbook, a man with a loaf of bread appears on the screen. Scroll, click, you're dead. There's the street of crocodiles cordoned off at each end.

Dear X

Face it! You haven't ---. in ages.  
The deadbeat dad calls out for sushi & beer  
while I go out on a limb. Tomorrow

we memorize colloquial expressions having to do  
with sex, in the strict sense, scum, lily pads  
nipped in the bud. A mob becomes part of a current

that sucks them in and how could the prohibition  
not apply here, within an inch of her life, pass through  
the noose, *comme une lettre à la poste* ?

Dear X

Nor is it all. After replacement therapy he stands  
on his dignity while she shoots off her mouth an edge  
to her voice like some kind of abattoir about to collapse

human vitrine large glass a file

the minute you divine its wraparound structure you begin  
your descent in the chatty anonymity toward the cut  
boarded up for now by fake interiors and steel brackets.

Unversed in the dialectic of the hole you call it rupture  
of desire indiscreet gap open to view as if any old sewers  
were conduit enough into the city's black lung heart  
wolfman at a pauper's grave

Dear X

Speaking of slander, your clandestine bid did not go unnoticed. In the double driveway the queen's laughter singles me out, like a hand-held camera, I approach the bar:

Pink ribbons, banister, odor di femina

"I'll bring my little girl for a swim!"

Sweet daisy wheel pounds at the abhorrence.

Should you remain without news of me holed up in the morass, it would not do to film behind the pier. See the rope, absolute drag, that loop in the river. Someone's dying to lop it off as if he were a doctor or land surveyor inverting the flow, remapping the lot.

As if gender's corset had not been hung to dry.