

ROUNDING MIDNIGHT

Noise and darkness collide disavowal for charge as maligned states. Moving crack past sound barrier. A curtain of waves and particles traces a different outline. Darkness thickens the ecologies of mind—connects with something out of reach but lies within like someone far away or long gone or met again and again and again, each time for the first time.

Midnight met on a precipice, urged from line to saunter by twilight. Splashed galaxy broadside of night's breadth like diameter for bare eyes. Fireflies on sine, star shot scratch. Land-sick dogs send sober tongues up molded aluminum. Keys sent too, scrambling mixed metal song sung more better than heavy permits permit.

Smile dares in thrall of delirious trill, curved acute-like like integer-weary eyes in company overdue. More acute like caterpillar crawling along knife's edge. More acute like falcon fast approaching unannounced slicing jagged sky from vantage of prey in flight. More acute like silica worn so fine you can wash your hands with, so fine you can sink in, so fine smooth run through hourglass pinch. Midnight pulled taut to point zero zero zero zero edge of Newton before it gives and more acute still 'til tessellations draw surface in tiny brittle honey shards. Any old wind stirs a line. Dense matter held up to dotted smoke ring four stack decimal long-denominator-watt pale fire hoping evening treats kinder than morning.

Any old wind waiting at a breadline—long hours spent waiting in line for starch. Someone exclaims: I'm going to see him. The next day, the would-be seer is missing from the line. The day after, back in line again. The others say: what happened? Did you get him? No, someone says. The line to see him is even longer.

An image of ammunition on the back cover of a book in a suitcase pulled from a conveyor belt behind fifteen kilogram tin of ghee. Speech better accompanied by smoke. Lounge in terminal but no lighters can pass through security. Lighter at cold store held fast with line of string strung longer than day and most susceptible to disavowal by its own charge. Contorted fructose whirlwind shuttling through compact spaces scratching at the surface of giant crystals. 56k modem dial-up tone whipped to fever in centrifuge. Tin snare cascade—god likes me when I work but loves me when I sing.

80hz fog at night grinding scotopic apparatus to occluded fill. Hinge-loose line humidified rounds serrated midnight. Midnight rounds round midnight like 20km buffer between speed limit and camera flash. Oryx bleach-soaked in high-beam. Momentum-slung for added effect, rounding midnight for timepass not spine, for montage and mañana and inshAllah-time. Motion is lotion. This as a kind of habitus. A ground that slurs corners recklessly enough at angle oblique enough to stretch easy a midnight—ghost ride a midnight. World turns a liquid atlas. Risk sinews excitable hell-way plunging twilight heading both ways at the same time. A world of vectors and curves. A legato for anxious registrars who design deadlines at 11:59PM.

Perpetuity established at 20,124 TEU. Deadweight capacity of 199,629 tons. 0.000002 tonnes of planetary viral load. Superheated polypropylene plankton ancestors pressed at 900 tons of force. Three world records on a diet consisting exclusively of approximately 1,000 chicken nuggets per day. 42 billion tons of water to increase the length of a day by 0.06 microseconds. 7km of rolled-carbon-cylinder-ends at placeholder volume for 3.65 cubic meter flat over 20 years at rate of 50 a day. Landmines still asleep at speed of 100kmph or above but who can even really say whether 30 days double entry means two entries within a total of 30 days or two separate allotments of 30 days each, totaling 60 days?

Draw a small total dark ready to move. Through-line through line exploded as life lived in stride—mid-resolution slide. Soup of muffled whispers on a cheap vacation. Something happens for 40 minutes. Gossamer when the thing escapes. Gossamer cowboy lasso for sensory mechanics. Tension held to infinite thought. Cognition pitched to a kind of waiting elasticated to loading. That as a kind of looking. Sight skewed to epochal pause of recognizable. Incandescent red dotting apertures. A black hole assembled, then disassembled, packed, shipped, unpacked, then reassembled again, lockstep with many signals buoyed somewhere 18 degrees beyond event's horizon. Maybe glimpsed, maybe not. Midnight

rounded floating a landscape, dragging parabola spilled over arms-length. Something rises, then lowers to depth. Some sort of score that withholds relief. People emerge looking like something happened to them.

Bumblebee crawling into air conditioner vent. Coolant metal rainfall from screaming split units piled high overhead—AC bebop. One hundred nineteen kilometers per hour, eyes closed, faith walk. Travelator rumbling undertow. Four-wheel case gliding over marble, wrist resting featherlike on handle. Come to a stop at red light. Passengers mid-discussion. Metal tap on driver-side window. Metal asks to meet metal. Metal leaps. Gear shifts. Pedal to metal. Metal roars away. Cloud of smoke in its place.

Hospitality for three days and charity after that. Sieves accrue in lattice form, taking shape as objective reality. Double take, triple take. Something like midnight gnawing at an engine. Sounds sunk into cracks. Lost files in the shuffle. Machine operator at pharmaceutical manufacturing lab—range of motion that of drummer playing tune of mass mobilization.

Ghost flight taxi down runway lubricated in standardized phraseology for landing rights use regulation provision. Souls on board attendant not to passengers but to slot pair circulation. Midnight marauders synopsis on inflight entertainment system reads: Many thanks to Matthias, who flew with us recently, for suggesting this to us.

Midnight rounded to taste of twilight shoreline—taste of majdool dense like traffic jam packed tight with reverb of sun's tirade felt now in gums made numb at night's invite. Apparitions for left eyes. Yaw roll a midnight. Discomfort as a persistent pressure of weight stretched down a line. Synapses dimmed to background. Diaphragm vibrate ruse for tension. A lack of attention. A rounded midnight for blood flushing vortex lulled by sharp amusements pushed to exteriorize—a technician's faraday nightmare. A kind of intensified difference in usage of time. A throw into relation. A midnight snack. Now the perceptual field comes in spirals and dizzies. Damp generalized scale expressed as undertow for buildings to get carried away. Something keeps hearsay as sparkle along axial lines.

Decoherence nibbling psyche in tremors along strings shaped in carriage of waves that come as if ushered from some ulterior yet, pulled from nearly everything, saturated in ashes or fire or a midnight that spirals, growing and receding but never clearly so—irreverent calls combing at the seafloor a darkness made of words so thick and piled and cluttered that no strict meaning slips through intact.

Text by Lantian Xie