

Plasticity in its youth,  
soft and malleable, but  
only to trick us. And  
after a while it too  
changes. Changes fashion,  
changes norms. We are  
standing outside in the  
cold waiting to be let in  
the building and you are  
complaining again. About  
your own shifts and  
imbalances, or the newly  
minted balances you've  
yet to make peace with.

Etruscan Cups, Cold  
Birds:  
The More Time Passes the  
More We Change

There can be no change  
without a hint of  
pessimism, a will towards  
destruction. Four in the  
morning and we go, coffee  
in hand, to watch three  
buildings implode.

I don't know what isn't  
about metamorphosis,  
because more and more I  
fail to see statis as a  
legitimate ontology of  
anything.

Poems that are only  
change. Poems are only  
change. Language is a  
material is an open wound  
and our union the suture.  
*...instead of thinking of  
repetition as the return  
of the same—that 'most  
abysmal thought'—he [the  
ubermensch] learns to  
recognize the space for  
difference it opens. That  
is, he learns to affirm  
what is repeated, thus  
transforming repetition  
itself. Instead of  
passively bearing what  
happens, one can desire  
it, plastically.*  
(Malabou)

Allison Grimaldi Donahue

Rain falls on colorful  
leaves and so the dark  
sky doesn't much matter.  
I am reading Mallarmé  
again, again in  
translation but this time  
his letters. It is the  
autumn weather that draws  
me to him, a cold climate  
poet in my mind. I'm  
unfamiliar now with this  
kind of silence, exactly  
half my life spent

Almanac, Turin, 2021

elsewhere, where I  
thought things would  
provide more movement,  
more change, more  
excitement. Instead  
everything finds its  
level (for a time).

Back again in New York  
City. It is early I wait  
on line for an egg  
sandwich. I am waiting  
for the bookstore to  
open, for my sibling to  
call me back, for a  
paycheck to be deposited.  
I am waiting for the  
length of time it takes  
the others to pass their  
day, to enter into my  
day.

Let not the present  
become the gravedigger of  
the future. Or is it of  
the past? It's Nietzsche  
either way and we sit  
drinking tequila at the  
kitchen table and  
shouting 'time is a  
bastard' at one another.  
We are shouting because  
we are drunk and arguing  
over time and aging and  
how the two things,  
combined of course,  
always, have got us down  
and out.

There is the sagging of  
your knees and the  
creases around your eyes  
and mouth. My vision has  
become poor and when I  
wake up my feet hurt.  
Your hair is fast turning  
gray; my metabolism  
slows; your arms flap; my  
chin pocks.

There is a push and a  
pull and lately it mostly  
feels all the same. An  
exhausted tension neither  
of us, no one, can get a  
grip on.

On the weekend I will get  
over you On the weekend I  
will buy the provisions  
for chicken stock On the  
weekend I'll make a  
decision On the weekend I  
have plans with your wife  
On the weekend I will  
open the basement boxes  
and sort them On the  
weekend is when I always

get the cat food On the  
weekend you go to work  
and I hide under the  
covers On the weekend the  
train to the city is  
usually late On the  
weekend they don't work  
on the bridge On the  
weekend she would bake On  
the weekend the season  
changed all at once.

P pours another glass of  
wine and K tells me about  
a pregnancy dream P is  
packing to visit  
California K is still  
wanting to quit that job  
P tells us he had a good  
week and wants to invite  
us to dinner K points out  
that on the door to P's  
building someone has  
written *I eat ass* and P  
says it was him with a  
wink K takes another slug  
P calls a restaurant and  
K checks a message P gets  
out another bottle of  
something and K gets more  
glasses from the cupboard  
P stretches out on the  
floor and K kisses his  
forehead

I cannot think of a kind  
of beauty meant to be  
contemplated and not  
eaten, consumed,  
devoured. I just cannot,  
cannot think of it and I  
am appalled at myself.

Plasticity: giver and  
receiver of its own form.  
The material (my body)  
lends itself to shape by  
bestowing shape. I see on  
facebook a girl I went to  
high school with loves  
Jesus and fitness and how  
our different notions of  
creation must be  
affecting our/the world.

A bat flies into the room  
and attaches itself to an  
overhead pipe. Soft ears  
to soft cries. We cannot  
change how we walk but we  
can change our  
relationship to the  
surface of the Earth. I  
can choose to experience  
gravity with levity, I  
think, as I fall to my  
knees in the quake.

In a paperless philosophy  
our conversation here  
tonight would be enough.  
No need to prove through  
the ages—just imagine the  
reverence for experience  
and how intensely one  
might listen. But such a  
level of trust doesn't  
seem, but *is*, impossible.

*The expulsion from the  
garden is coupled with a  
shift from fruit to bread  
[cf. Genesis 3:19] the  
distinctly human food,  
and marks the next step  
toward humanization  
through civilization.*  
(Kass)

Jaws dropped watching the  
dogs and the chickens  
gnawing at the apples and  
the human food with the  
same voracity. In the  
snow we saw trails of  
yellow, trails of red and  
it was melting under  
foot. An early season  
thaw like the clanging of  
a bell right by yr ear or  
the buzz hum drone of  
standing beneath a  
factory window.

Something from my diary  
in 2002: *blah, blah,  
blah.*

The big secret is the  
only way out of here is  
with nonsense.

America makes me think  
about money too much and  
I hate it—I'd rather  
spend my time in the  
shower thinking of  
flowers or sex or the two  
together. But everyone  
talks about money all the  
time and my shower is  
ruined. The shower where  
I first masturbated is  
ruined, the shower where  
I bathed as a kid—  
carefree. Now filled up  
with so-and-so's stocks  
and bonds and rainy day  
funds.

I take it all as proof  
that humanization has not  
made us civil: a false  
equivalency. Sometimes I  
think I'd prefer to give  
up, surrender, call it

quits, but only humans do  
that. So I don't.

On Sundays the sun sets  
earlier and we eat dinner  
in the dark. I split a  
potato open and let the  
butter melt on the hot  
flesh. I let it melt and  
I stare down onto the  
well worn plate full of  
knife scratches and the  
well worn table we know  
is filled with mites and  
I listen for them.

I open the window to  
touch the falling snow  
and sting my elbow on the  
wasps, dead, caught in  
the ledge—petrified.  
Wounds taken from summer  
months and brought here  
now, to the cold. I  
always begged for a  
connection, a pet rodent,  
a companion in the  
fields.

The point of autofiction  
is to make both the self  
and the self and the  
fiction my interesting,  
to imbue them both with  
more meaning or any  
meaning at all, where  
none is to be found. The  
critters sit around the  
campfire telling lies and  
toasting marshmallows.

K walks along the beach  
absorbing electrons  
through her feet and  
getting a charge. P picks  
up shells from where the  
tide meets the shore and  
shouts *Nature isn't mute*  
(Lin). K stretches out  
and attempts to feel the  
weight of the world only  
to rise and say, *I guess  
I've reached nirvana now.*  
P suggests hotdogs for  
lunch.

Build a nest made for  
shelter and it is there  
we can spend our visits.

*There is no scar, but  
there is difference.*  
(Malabou) Falling off the  
ladder my jiggles jumble,  
my pieces go awry. Time  
splits open and I crawl  
inside it, never to be  
found again.