

a thoughtful tribute
an equalizer of voices
a propaganda machine
a fact or wisdom
a direct statement
a subtle innuendo
just words
7.7.14

WORDS ON A PAGE 335

Words collapsing
at the focal point
of their meaning.
Pen and paper,
the perfect medium
for a one-sided conversation.
Voices are lost
in interpretation.
Identity broken down,
quantified, and qualified.
The page provides no answers
to lingering questions.
Ideas expressed
then scribbled out,
then rewritten,
then scribbled out again,
a time-consuming struggle.
Too much time to think
about what to say,
never enough time to write it.
And it's all for nothing
if it doesn't end just right.
7.9.14

**PCAF: Build Your Catacomb
Anywhere But Here Vol. 7**

WHAT IF SUPERMAN REALLY COULD SAVE THE DAY? 336

What if Superman really could save the day?
What if he flies the skies,
proclaiming truth, justice, and the American way?
He would tear these prison walls down,
burn away the fences and shackles.
He would burn the 100 volume compiled laws
and just write one pocket-sized rule book.
He would give food and shelter to everyone
and end poverty the world over.
He would melt down every bullet, destroy every gun,
and throw every missile into the sun.
But really, if Superman came all the way
from the ruined remains of Krypton
and took one look at the madness,
he would turn around and go right back.
7.13.14

THIS IS A POEM 337

This is a poem
in which I use words
to express an idea.
In this poem,
I use line breaks
and sentence structure
in non-standard form
as a visual aesthetic.
I count the number of lines
and words
to make sure it's not too short.
I will rewrite it a few times
in my master
in my composition book,
in the Black(est) Book,
on a piece of paper for Mike's file;
maybe even a manuscript,
though I don't know if it's of that quality.
I pause in my writing
when unrelated thoughts
creep into my mind
to make sure I stay on track.
I wonder if I really have a point to this,
or am I trying to be over-literary -
all style and no substance.
I try to think of other
clever things to say,
but nothing comes to mind.
Now that this poem has run its course,
I think about how to end it,
but I can't have a meta-ending;
I did that
in my last poem.
7.16.14

**PCAF: Build Your Catacomb
Anywhere But Here Vol. 7**

STRUCK DOWN 338

Struck Down
No merit
No interest
3-4
6-3
3-1
Unheard dissent
Facts not in evidence because
they're swept under the rug
with a straw roll
on AP poll
or a Gallup poll
it doesn't matter

public hearing
with the public hearing about it
objection

objection made
blanket objections
Common sense overruled
sentence reform
only rewarding sentences
lock the doors
and hold them tight with a prop A, B, C, or D
bring us your poor, hungry, uneducated
officer Joe Blow at the 4th precinct
plays surrogate father -
handcuffs, balcony sandwiches, concrete bed, inn security,
and wise counsel -
"You have the right to remain silent while we do
whatever we want."
new legislation, population control
one strike
You're out
7.17.14

BEST FOR BUSINESS 339

3
6
12
24
48
et cetera, et cetera
on and on
exponential prison expansion
prisoners the fastest growing demographic
40,000 beds for 50,000 people
neatly stacked in rows and columns
counted, tallied, vouchered
\$35,000 incentive
in to the pockets of the rule makers
a monopoly on goods, services, and human warehousing
minimum wage, maximum gain
tough on crime is best for best
7.21.14

NOTHING LEFT 340

no prayer
no church
no guardian
no sword
no eternity
no afterlife
no savior
no sacrifice
no mysterious ways
no cavalry
no promised land
no reward
no help
no faith
7.27.14

YOU DON'T KNOW ME 341

You don't know me,
understandable
7.28.14

AFTERNOON 340 MHCS

The ant crawls through the sparse grass, winding through the
serpentine gaps in between patches. The ant finds a butter scotch
wrapper and investigates, crawling over it, sensing it with its
antennae. A soft breeze blows and the butter scotch wrapper
gutters rocks. The ant runs away.
a summer afternoon (2763)
the squeaking chains
of the swing set
7.24.14

THINKS OVERHEARD WHILE SITTING 343

ON A BENCH AS PEOPLE WALKED BY
Did you know that
you lose one and three-quarters of a pound
of your body weight
when you die -
that's science.
And then after you die, you're regenerated;
that's where the term generations comes from.
So I said
"You're a pain the ass, but not in a good way."
what's the prompt, anyway?
I'm gonna say it again, if I can finish:
It's like being underwater with an oxygen tank -
artificial air -
it ain't yours, you're in suspended animation,
And I was staring,
and I was like,
"What are you looking at?"
I swear to fucking God,
my boy Ricky is so fuckin' fine.
- what are you talking about?
He actually threw shit across the yard.
I'm not really sure what was said because it was said in a whisper)
One thing I can't do,