

& nobody in between  
Lars Palm





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# **& nobody in between**

**Lars Palm**

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**some of the dead**



**(poem beginning with a phrase by gregory corso)**

ah, botticelli opens the door of his studio

someone enters

the street enters

the sun & the wind & a one  
legged veteran from one of the on  
going wars enter

ah, botticelli sneaks out of his studio  
leaving the door open

**(croon)**  
*i.m Simon Howard*

too soon  
no moon  
in the sky  
on a night  
like this

departing too  
soon for the  
moon the bus  
is only half  
    full

the driver  
took off his  
head & put  
it on the  
dashboard

**(10 minutes with a painting by ivan aguéli)**

stood on the head this view of  
this egyptian village & this mosque  
flooded by this light stating simply  
this is me & what do you want to  
do about it?

& that head swimming toward the Nile

& that head gushing with images of  
scorched ground crunching under the  
feet of their local imam walking to  
his Friday afternoon job interpreting  
the words of his employer who no  
one around there has ever met in  
person in any of those narrow shady  
streets inside the wall

& that head pounded by the sun slipping  
into a tiny shop for bread & oil to keep  
it going

**(anselm hollo's eyes)**

*in memoriam*

notes taken by kind permission of  
on another roof looking out across the sea  
the art of unlearning the lies you were told  
attractions oppose  
& looking left you reeling  
possibilities bloom aiming at your head  
of course on course or en route  
existence has been known to unfold

looking through anselm hollo's eyes  
looking through anselm hollo's eyes  
looking through anselm hollo's eyes  
looking through anselm hollo's eyes

(poem beginning with a sentence by george orwell)

a not unblack dog was  
chasing a not unsmall  
rabbit across a not  
ungreen field

    days blink thinking  
maybe of night coming or  
just gone

    fishing kids by the river  
as it passes through  
a town

    houses standing still  
    ground moving slowly  
south then meeting the not  
ungreen field says good evening  
    shadows gather in newly  
built cul-de-sacs bewildering the  
owner of that not unblack  
dog calling "hey george  
get back here right now" &  
now for something completely  
different

    a runaway nose  
    how do you adjust to living  
by a disappearing lake?  
    follow it? where?  
    here is a person with  
a bucket

    here is another one  
a woman drying herself with a  
printed towel

    here is a singer memorizing  
a painting for future use  
    & here  
    we plant a tree or a notion  
    run rabbit  
run not unsmall rabbit

**(the note)**

*i.m LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka*

because each volume is distinctly different from all the others

because a simple ballpoint pen is sufficient

because somebody blew up america & the lecturer has not yet risen

because somebody needed to say these things & take the shit-storms  
bound to follow

because these lines are written in a place that is really nowhere

because racism is still alive & kicking using iron pipes

because public service radio censors anti-fascist songs

because this is not a suicide note

because you turned jazz into poetry & poetry into jazz

because punk wasn't around in your youth

because you gave us what we didn't know we wanted

because this is the exact opposite of a suicide note

because anti-fascism is self-defense

because you set some mighty high standards for questioning the mighty

because our heads are still colonial

because you gave us new slightly more spacious hearts

because the previous statement is existential & political & not clinical

because capitalism is a mental state & you knew it isn't healthy

because fresh air is a good thing

because this is the 20<sup>th</sup> volume

**(why not?)**  
*i.m Philip Whalen*

drizzly sunday  
formally first day  
of spring

do those drivers on  
that street corner  
outside the cafe window  
have any heads?  
from their driving i  
think the question  
could be asked

\*

& a verb is  
what is done  
by some personal pronoun

that settled the dust  
on our flying carpet  
seconds before take-off

\*

finally rain stopped  
now them budding flowers  
have plenty to drink  
should they want to  
& the children & their  
parents some really  
fine puddles to  
jump around in

\*

in a parking lot

2 black bmws  
one with a plate  
reading ktb  
    (the arabic root for  
    book)  
the other reading wok

a book on the art of woking  
or woking a book?

\*

soundtrack from silent  
    movie  
light good so far  
today so might be  
    some photo ops  
later on  
after maybe some translating

simply stealing some  
voices as if i didn't  
have enough of those  
    already

\*

fudge wrappers loitering  
all over the room  
in the strangest of places

a day could be for a longish  
walk should nothing  
interfere with that broadcast

\*

first to come today

maybe not in that sense

\*

saturday night  
no fighting  
    fuelled by alcohol

maybe by vegan  
hamburger some  
time later

might i hope they  
contain carrots onion  
garlic & what else is

up to the chef

\*

non  
profit book  
exchange with  
no poetry shelf

"there was no interest"

not a possibility  
in any civilized  
country

\*

ok this is yesterday

nonetheless

"hams overturn danish truck"

& today a professional foot  
ball player  
cutting a big toe  
on a broken tea cup

leaving him out of at  
least one game

& tomorrow?

\*

old white-bearded  
man outside in  
the street apparently  
not doing too well

but at least he  
didn't get hit by  
that car  
a taxi no less

& staggered out of the  
picture on his feet

\*

guitar practice  
with sleeping bear  
iranian protest  
song & whatnot  
& racists running  
amok in small  
nearby town &  
friday the 13<sup>th</sup>  
wasn't the apocalypse  
this time either  
& now on to a girl in  
a window in havana

\*

"we (as in iranians) use  
it by the tea spoon. the  
pakistanis & indians use  
it by the garden shovel"

it's all about the curry

\*

thursday night  
no mind  
to make chaos

may  
be

\*

gulls making noise to  
inaugurate a new  
year's  
eve & a false  
start to world  
poetry  
day really being  
tomorrow as if they  
knew or cared about  
such things

**some of the living**

**(a good guess)**  
*for richard lopez*

what's the sound of one hand clapping?

nothing much

what's the sound of nothing much?

give me that hand

**(across the world)**

*for Jill Jones*

so now we have  
learned all photographers  
are alike  
    always 200 metres  
behind & always using  
all those words not printed  
knowing we prefer those  
    maybe

**(on f)**

*for/from Matthew Sherling*

fertile fire extinguisher

futile or not

fruitful salad sings

fretful elderly dogs

frightful noise made

fragile

fragrance find another

fragment fought this skull

fracture facilitating that

fractal being understood

**(import/export)**  
*for Sohrab Rahimi*

although singing  
echoed among the  
walls rattling the  
windows shuffling  
the balconies

sundried clothes  
churros from the  
landlady

this strange  
love for very  
small dogs  
this enormous  
consumption of  
sugar this way  
of being

lately the  
birds have  
been behaving  
like cats  
& recently  
a new  
definition of  
planethood

as previously  
reported neverland  
now has  
a physical  
territory

you ponder  
the significance  
of brightly

coloured bricks  
in arid climates  
decide what  
language to  
use to talk  
to the waves

that other  
koala simply  
denied involvement  
with eucalyptus  
or other  
such substances

now here's  
this chinese  
man eating  
paella with  
chopsticks

& always  
that french  
connection when  
farmers rage

stepped among  
the rigorously  
arranged rocks

& the tree  
has an  
identity crisis  
identified as  
a bottle  
of shoes

**(soiled)**

*for & with Tim Cresswell*

gone fishing or bathing or  
hiking in the hills & the villages

we went for fish soup  
in franco's widow

lizard dives headlong into  
some melted ice cream

& now we know what  
jesus christ did

with his mother's hat  
*on that tartan travel rug*

sitting amidst an avalanche  
of wooden doors

couldn't live two  
months on the streets

ever mindful of  
what he steps on

who am i to judge a man on  
a bench talking to himself?

how he got into a fight  
with his entire native country

(kristian körner's ear)

hear

here

in here

in

side this cast labyrinth  
where echoes take a break  
fast or even faster  
not holier  
than thou

this ear has heard things to make it curl & things to make it dance in the street. cornered by a pair of hyperactive twins. swinging from an eyebulb this ear returns to the balcony. not to get married this time but to listen to a pneumatic drill & turn it into music

hear

there

where  
ever

by tide coming in gushing against the eardrum  
& a sorcerer by trade

this ear heard words that make up an entire sentence. will you two please be quiet for a while. my thoughts are cracking

hear

where?

out here in the fields  
open or shut tightly in  
to a cul-de-sac  
sacking your security guard  
guarding that

ear

hear

what fear of dark alleys or silence

is there

to disappear before

hand

me down

that hill just off the horizon. that horizon just off the coast. that coast just  
off the coat. that coat just off the man. that man just off the back of the  
woman. that woman just after informing the artist

it's his right ear

(notes in the margin)  
*for Emily Critchley*

1

a pen  
penned in  
a penitentiary

holding love  
& all that  
holding all else

ok now bound  
with glue or  
thread

no golden dawn  
no national frontex  
for example

no ex  
the ex  
those dutch anarchists

penned in sheep  
cattle voting on  
which line to stand in

as a stand  
in for who  
you see over there

2

why a tie?  
a neck to tie  
into a neat knot

ding dong  
the witch

hunt is dead

3

november afternoon  
where's luke?  
lost in a sonnet?

so why don't we  
go put up some  
exit signs?

4

let me throw a  
slightly mad notion  
out there

we are not here  
to be food  
for tigers

we're here  
to be food  
for thought

**(4 volumes)**  
*for Azita Ghahreman*

volume 1

begins here  
in another country  
with another alphabet

volume 2

proceeds to enter  
this street for no  
other reason than to  
go there where weary  
feet & elephants  
may rest before  
heading into the foot  
hills

volume 3

settles on the water  
waiting for the sun  
to turn it red &  
the fishing boats to  
enter the tiny harbour

volume 4

is where what is famously  
known as reality seeps  
in & things take an  
unexpected turn to the  
left leaving that boring  
old censorship far behind  
causing it to turn itself  
into a cargo ship

**(for his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday)**

*me retracto de todo lo dicho*

Nicanor Parra

not leaving the room  
this room makes room for space  
age mechanics taking a shuttle apart  
a part of space still endless  
ends less than a mile from here  
where pageants drop faces  
facing their wall of silence  
science proving them unrealistic  
realism not even being part of the equation  
(the equator is another thing entirely)  
poseidon claims possession of half a head of hair  
& when applicable beard  
of any person passing his sacred invisible line  
by sea for the first time  
being temporarily out of order which is an odd notion  
& dealt with so quickly we hardly noticed what happened  
& how & besides we were still talking about  
whether nicanor & anti-parra just passed through the room from wall to  
window  
& what that might imply  
& if we really do have to relearn everything we know about dimensions  
a joke of course all this confusing the cops or so it would hope  
for hope would be the last thing to abandon us  
& confusion the entertainment along this very long busride  
to somewhere across a narrow strait  
by ferry for want of a bridge not quite finished yet  
to escape the closed minds not set to open  
for another few generations  
to escape them generators humming a song we know  
but can't be arsed with recognizing  
for recognition should be deserved or so we think  
planning the new face of a derelict plaza  
a fountain is a must maybe with a lady on a horse  
& can that be done in some vaguely cubist style?

& some bright colours on at least the doors & windowframes  
& then it's time for a street artist with some irrelevant name  
to be unleashed & finally maybe do something about those trees  
all 3 of them seem to need a good peeling  
during a break the workers sit down each peeling an orange  
one feeding half of his to a duck who looks at it  
& goes to pick a fight with a seagull instead  
a dog enters centre stage & the director resigns  
they simply have no patience these days  
& somewhere in the outskirts of this particular day  
an eye eyes a new kind of icebox powered by solar cells  
where our director sits in a corner cursing all dogs to hell  
laughing wildly at times remembering his next film  
scribbling on a wall for somebody else to read  
& yet the cops are neither confused nor amused  
a muse turns into a mouse exiting through a crack in the door  
& takes off down the street to a nice cheese store  
steering clear of whomever wants to play cat  
might our street artist be done by now  
& happy with her work so we might get on  
with peeling those trees? never mind  
i take back everything i said







## **lars palm**

lars palm lives with his lovely wife, currently in Malmö where he writes, translates, edits & teaches, among other things. he's the author of 4 long books & a long line of chapbooks & such in print & online. recent publications are *means* (kfs, 2014) & a translation of *Serendip's travel book* by Azita Ghahreman (swirl editions, 2015)



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