

this is looking

intro

this is looking.
looking back on
bending over backwards
bracing yourself
 facing outwards
 flying until faceplanted
 face painted with mud
 and facing

fences

now we're walking to school
catching up with
counting ducks
while running past fences
where there's a whole lot of
 face-painting
 face-planting
 facing-up

who's face?

this is alarming.
the guard dog, barks
the fence-sitter, shocked
a face pressed against the glass sliding door
 facing that way
 facing up to
 facing forward
 faces, frozen
 face it.

who's face?

--

cuckoo clock

there's a whole lot of dirt on this ground
there's a hole in the ground
there's a home in the hole
there's a dustpan

there's a whole lot of sweeping the ground around
rugs being swept under holes
holes being swept into doormats
driveways being swept into the kitchen
 where we're cooking with gear oil
 and oiling the bird cages
 and caging the keychains

and chaining the chair legs to the cuckoo clock
and pinning down the hour hand

so that it doesn't fall in the hole.
onto the heap of dirt
now growing over
into the trash mountain garden.

there's a whole lot of weed-eating in this garden.
a hole full of trimmings.
a whole lot of humming.
a heap of third page headlines in the compost.
muffled whistling under machine moaning,
leaf-blowing.

now there's a whole lot of seeds flying around outside my window,
and they're sticking to oiled fences.
to bicycle tires and tired eyes.
blowing into ears and growing out through nostrils and sweat glands,

and when the wind dies down
and the day darkens,
i sleep

and you sleep
and they sleep
and this sleeps

who sleeps soundly?

we sleep
you sleep
this sleeps
I sleep

who sleeps soundly?

--

time machine

i'm carving candle wax into ear shapes
that listen to our small movements.
our flicking away of flies in the heat.
our evaporating
together with the fumes oozing out from cold sofas
filled with old sweat.

there's a leg resting on the pillow.
I can't find it's owner out here in outer space.

its toes twitch to the humdrum beat,
beating through the ceiling.
beating at the door.
beating in your throat.

fingers tap along to the beat.
they trace lines on palms,
breaking heart-lines,
breaking head-lines,
breaking life-lines,
breaking the silence.

and I wonder if these stones on the tea-table,
now floating around in zero-gravity,
remember
the beating.
the beating of bare feet,
marching,
chasing,
taking.

taking time,
and turning it on its side.

i hear ghost voices
and gears turning

they say: talk to your father.
father says: talk to my mother.
mother says: they're not the talkers.
they say: we're just walking.
we say: we will be held accountable.
but all we hear is counting,
as the second arm ticks.
ticks forwards
ticks backwards
ticks sideways

-

i struggle to give word to thought.
i struggle to give thought to things that you have witnessed.
i struggle bearing witness to your truth.
i struggle to trust the preachers of these truths.
i preach to my own palm.
my palms don't tell me anything about your past.
your past sticks to my blood cells.
your past jumps with the nerves under my skin.
your past blasts through the speakers in this soundproofed room.

and your stories are evaporating with the fumes oozing out from this cold sofa

full of old sweat.

I hear gears turning
and ghosts saying:

i don't want to be in this time machine
i don't want this screen to tell me my fortune
i don't want the candle to burn out
i don't want your tea to go cold
i don't want to keep staring at the spaces between words
the gaping holes in faces

i'm sticking my hand in,
and the cold sticks to my fingers.