INNOCENCE
INNOCENCE
FIRST EDITION

Copyright © 2022 Michael Joseph Walsh

All rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America
ISBN 978-1-7348167-5-4

DESIGN ≈ SEVY PEREZ
Brandon Grotesque & Adobe Caslon Pro

This book is published by the

Cleveland State University Poetry Center
csupoetrycenter.com
2121 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2214

and is distributed by

SPD / Small Press Distribution, Inc.
spdbooks.org
1341 Seventh Street Berkeley, California 94710-1409

A catalog record for this title is available from the Library of Congress
國破山河在  
*The country is broken; the mountains and rivers remain.*

—Du Fu
I.

Innocence —— 9

놀이터 —— 17
Playground —— 19
Ownership —— 21
Forty Days —— 25
Common Flowers —— 27
Forecast —— 29
본국 —— 32
Native Country —— 34
There Is a Body Inside Experience —— 36
Drone of Art —— 37
Meridian —— 40
극락 —— 43
Pure Land —— 45

II.

Insider —— 49

III.

Wild News —— 69

Negative Light —— 117

Notes —— 121
Acknowledgments —— 123
INNOCENCE

So the drawing moves
in the space that resembles air.
So the adventure of intricacy smiles
one time finally, then is gone.

There is another logic
by night, no flowers.
There is other than me
stretched out in the fabric of voice
to clothe and adorn
this secret. And whatever spills
into the present is the thing that will last.
And the world whose clichés we awakened is already
far behind us.

But only faintly, held up unto music:
to let usage guide desire,
to let the dream cut
from the body form all four walls.

We too have our associations,
our immanence along the horizon
as it muscles from red to green.
And so sweetly then,
to give in to that failure:
on the one hand what one is,
on the other its opposite future,
which surrounds us now, and is our world.

The stars fall, a love of ugliness
warms the throat. And whoever would not
be embedded in that house is left to call out “Who?”,
open mouth to the wind.

From the end of that human
possession to be not sweet enough,
to grow bad in the good light,
in the exhaust cloud of art.

There are many ways,
there is more than one way.
To say the book is all lies,
to say the market is no longer
a money bag, to say a factory symbol
will be the measure of the growth of, say,
the factory image as it swells across
all dimensions.

Now picture a money bag
of similar proportions,
your son or daughter
semi-attached as products of that state.

There are more of us than there used to be.
To make the right
decisions we need to look at things
in different locations, returning home to mourn

the loss of being emplaced and alive,
rearing up thus large in spirit
to solve the problem of a life
whose size no longer serves us.

A volcano of oil is flowing,
and we believe in it,
and call it our innocence.
We admire ourselves
amongst ourselves, not denying
the derisory squeals
into which our avatars
plunge. For this is the minute in all its voice

which would be sweet, and swallow our hearts.
Coherence is thick, time
is thick, reality
is cruel and knows us

for our danger,
which is fashionable now,
and will predict our slow end.
Someday something

(as I write this I want)
someday something
will happen. And when it is cold,
when it is warm,
there is a taste we will share
for a science that speaks
a cloud for every possible face, a body
for nature gutting itself to shine

only now and then at first, then always
(to quote the voice) as the golden
poem “I am breathing,” the moaning of
the I who meets the eye

in the evaporating pool.
Because it is cruel to live,
and crueler, on this earth which is
an entire body of cherished

affinity wet feet and air, not to,
because the condition of permanent
crisis we hold
inside ourselves remembers us

in the egg of our eventual deaths,
I will write this as it occurs
though cold and teeming, though florid
with pictures destroying the cared-for air,
until my hands go still
(thus crueler), and April is torn
back into words we know—
and by this what affections new

shall summon us,
what screams become
economies within
and seed the air with impossible sound.