

NATURALISM

POEMS

WENDY XU

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Naturalism

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FIRST EDITION

Grateful acknowledgment is given to the following journals, where many of these poems first appeared, often in slightly different forms:

<i>Hyperallergic</i>	“by action”
<i>jubilat</i>	“recovery”
	“some people”
<i>PEN Poetry Series</i>	“the window rehearses”
	“theme song”

Several of these poems were also collected in an audio project from Black Cake Records, entitled *Phrasis*. Thank you Kelly Schirmann.

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For immigrant parents

but that two parallels do cross

-John Wieners

RECOVERY

Whatever the vectors pushed off into, a flight
inching home in snow, you in your delighted
heavy abstraction. I was an egg and more eggs swimming
in the margin's pool. Life is vague and vaguer when
we still kneeling in front of the television push
a finger inside. I smoke alone in my room, the war was
a disambiguation across platforms, notably its own
eddy to music. The it of love was on my mind.

A halo of newsprint, when I became alone I claimed
the greedy living text, jasmine, the sink sang
its steam about the house. The war was a syntactical
construction pointing back towards itself when I
could not turn off the radio's list of fatalities. I locked
my literal body inside the green deadbolt. The house breathed
its hotter mouth, when I became alone the whiter hand
of my country sweeping towards me.

SOME PEOPLE

I had a theory, it flung its scent over every shadow surface. One human apartment, one comes to a loud boil in the morning. If they found me oblique then I am doing this for my bluer augmented self now. Fear of the unannounced colloquial war, or, I liked it when the sullen man said “Just leave your name.” The restaurant was crowded. The news was death watches are available, I felt devoted to my new angel of losing time. Categorical elegy. Something I thought today was system error, was reverent, was one or orbiting nothing. No other.

THE WINDOW REHEARSES

There in the window it was speaking
to an expanse and wider
sense, noxious, nightly perfume
trails sidelong then
more away. I did doubt the little
sparer house its rooms
opened to dark, to further thought we first
saw the grove there, as is it
just is, was imminent despairing spent
over breakfast. There in double
window panes it hung
its fruit, airing
bitterly its juice, its chiming
to us a history. Swaying to us, we
preposterous two,
against silence a cracking of hands that
there in windows
framed us. I perform well
my surface for you. There, to quote
a window, is spun like tops.
He there of the slight, bent frame
conducts a symphony, lies

down upon a year's heat
still waving. There in the window it
remembers a chaos
lacking snow, what will excuse
our sleep then, the balcony, driving both
hands into the space I
am allowed. Not broadly gaming
a day and there, in the bend
of a window see it becoming some
late other self.

THEME SONG

Unrested we said to others leave
us pleased, not far along our track, still much

we want, half the slower good death
of cities too off your bristling map.

People demand two and then more hours
in a room already settled. Reverently I

am a kind of pulled down, mucking poorly
the clean slate, it was only how we

say tragic, notes shoved off
into blue air. In morning asking others

how not to die and bury, when is a resting
all together now to music. Set upon a high place once

and am ruined, what is after drawn
sweetly by love, doors fixed

to a theme, likely then we wash ourselves
against one another.

Wendy Xu is the author of *You Are Not Dead* (Cleveland State University Poetry Center, 2013) and the recipient of a 2014 Ruth Lilly Fellowship from the Poetry Foundation. Her writing has appeared in *The Best American Poetry*, *Poetry*, *Guernica*, *Gulf Coast*, *jubilat*, and elsewhere. She lives in Brooklyn and teaches writing at CUNY.