

generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself. An old thought that I should not reach out too far, learn to live with the mind inside my mind. But then sometimes I fool myself into my own mind, I lock myself in here. Better to be locked inside my own mind than locked out of someone else's. If I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself. An old thought that I should not reach out too far, learn to live with the mind inside my mind. But then sometimes I fool myself into my own mind, I lock myself in here. Better to be locked inside my own mind than locked out of someone else's. If I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself. An old thought that I should not reach out too far, learn to live with the mind inside my mind. But then sometimes I fool myself into my own mind, I lock myself in here. Better to be locked inside my own mind than locked out of someone else's. If I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself. An old thought that I should not reach out too far, learn to live with the mind inside my mind. But then sometimes I fool myself into my own mind, I lock myself in here. Better to be locked inside my own mind than locked out of someone else's. If I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself. An old thought that I should not reach out too far, learn to live with the mind inside my mind. But then sometimes I fool myself into my own mind, I lock myself in here. Better to be locked inside my own mind than locked out of someone else's. If I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself. An old thought that I should not reach out too far, learn to live with the mind inside my mind. But then sometimes I fool myself into my own mind, I lock myself in here. Better to be locked inside my own mind than locked out of someone else's. If I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself. An old thought that I should not reach out too far, learn to live with the mind inside my mind. But then sometimes I fool myself into my own mind, I lock myself in here. Better to be locked inside my own mind than locked out of someone else's. If I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling generated internally. Can't depend on him for entry into this bright feeling. I am in it already no question. Is there really anything to be done about it? Not his power to give, my will to expand inside myself.

INTIMACY WOULD
HAVE MEANT THE
CONNECTION ONLY
I'D HAVE SEEN
BETWEEN
YOUR PRIVATE
FEELING
AND
YOUR PUBLIC
ACTION

I've been sitting on Jakub's kitchen floor writing notes about Johannes Hansen's sculpture of two seated figures leaning towards each other one-on-one and eye-to-eye. Earlier today, walking and buying carrots, he'd asked, incredulous and receptive, about Robert Smithson. Never considered myself a fan of land-dominating art (just a participant in a land-dominating nation-state), but here in Copenhagen during this, the year of our great asbestos pipe explosion 2019, I am defensive, start arguing with myself. "It's ontological, desperate, anti-civilization. Isn't it extreme—the state of a person who puts themselves in a room with salt and mirrors!? The kind of mind created by a meeting like that." How to exist alongside all this material, and this perception. Locked out of every space except the one you build. The impulse to move your material, that it comes to you where you are, that art meets you as you are. I'm energized now, locate in myself the subjective feeling I so often criticize in others as entitlement (to the raw material). Think maybe I'm not as foolish as I'd thought, that I can still make the best of my time here sleeping in his bed alone.

On the train down to the city I'd been reading again about Paul Chan's proposal that art be *perfectly at home nowhere*, and wonder if maybe I am perfectly at home *only* there. Otherwise wouldn't I be anywhere else, find absolutely anything else to put my faith in? Like here now on this page, in his home that is not my home (after all). It turns out this year I reached Smithson's age of death, traveling from home to home inside my words.

That night I ask about his **BIG ANIMATING QUESTION**: Why is the world not what it should be? He will teach a class on the anthropology of violence. I tell him my question is the same at heart. The terror of a mind with no history except the one it's born into. A legacy of domination extending into our time and how do we get up (down) from under (over) it? And right then across the street, in a Renaissance-style garden, a lion taking a juicy bite out of a horse.

The next day we feel dizzy on a series of library walkways. Jakub says suicide is "the most optimistic part of my philosophy actually." The choice is always there for him, and in death he will be quite alright. With him, thought I'd glimpsed how "it" could happen—relating across even ground—*trusting that I will learn to love myself well enough to love you (whoever you are), well enough so that you will love me well enough so that we will know exactly where is the love: that it is here, between us, and growing stronger and growing stronger* (June Jordan, 1978).

He had warned me about his past: "I'm still messed up by it." But I'd thought...well, I'm still messed up by mine too. I was down on language

and hoping for someone to reach me by diving into the center of my words and zooming out.

Julio Cortazar imagined an apparatus that *turns loose the stretcher that works on each letter and leaves it flattened out and smooth, a horizontal string of ink*. And Smithson himself, a first-person actor in three-dimensional space, wrote in 1972 that language was *matter and not ideas*.

I have a follow-up question: how have I kept faith in whatever it is despite the terror. When he met me at the station my body was trying to burn itself alive with acid. But this willpower—what is it and where does it come from?

I'd almost forgotten to visit Kierkegaard's grave while I was here; had been thinking about his fuckboy manifesto *Either/Or*, and the dilemma looming over me: a choice between a solitary artistic life spent creating problems for language and politics (antisocial) and a concrete intimacy full of hope and ethical commitment (communal). Do you think artists are doing all I could for his country?

Then, in November at breakfast in Finland Ben shows me a W.S. Merwin poem about my dilemma: *if you have to be sure don't write —* And actually, if I had certainty—who needs words or images? At the residency I see a mound of dirt in the shape of Smithson's *Amarillo Ramp*. And not too far away, visitors make pilgrimage to Nancy Holt's *Up and Under*.

The next week Matthew agrees to read the part of Martha Rosler and I am Paul Chan: *we believe that art can do certain things for us*. But staging a meeting here with these questions alongside the speech of others is not enough.

Maybe I am undeserving of the kind of love that grows in peacetime. The peace of a healthy body. Separated at this moment from an idea of connection with someone who also seeks *shelter from the tyranny of hard borders* (Arundhati Roy, 2019). Understand my problem clearly right now as one about time. Trying to convince you to make "it" happen here and now. EK says maybe I'm the narcissist staring at Smithson staring into his *Amarillo* reflection before he crashed. Not simply undeserving of love, unable to participate. Person-to-person or country-to-country.

The one who breaks the relationship still cannot take the hyphen with him...we are still midway in a sentence— if I ask and it's not answered, I'll be locked out again, dejected. Whereas now I am inside the feeling