

Excerpts from *Saturn Book I: Analogue Prologue*

By Patrick Hurley

[179]

insistence is not repetition

some say the buried King
is the best fertilizer

the proximity and
persistence of small butterflies
is a mathematical proof

from a circle comes
an untitled sound
to utter its name
is a sweet-sounding curse

absolute sizes and differences
are not limitations

some extermination is afoot

to return to the beginning
is to recognize that
some realities are
more real than others

[180]

in the madhouse
the inmates are cataloging
new hieroglyphs on
tiny scraps of paper
and tracing in the leavings
on dinner plates mandalas
that the dishwashing machine
will eradicate with
its efficient chemical stream

the richness of their utterances
to one another are derided
by the doctors as glossolalia

sirens scream in southern smoke—
another human construct
burned to fine ash

[181]

not every detail is witchcraft
but the line between
the natural and the synthetic
cannot exist

did travelers from
distant star systems
inadvertently bring
the very spores that
destroyed their
home planets and
did those spores
evolve into us?

a heavy washed-out
blue cloud vision
at least in the beginning

consider a token given
by a mysterious stranger
say a ring placed upon
the middle finger of
the left hand

its marks are clear but
deciphering them
is the work of
more than one lifetime

[182]

Vignette ... a broken mirror on an empty street ... just legible in its remnants is the gnomonic utterance 'OBJECTS ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR'

[183]

numbers adding up to 9 or 10
a common occurrence

the sound of the wind
and a hand copying out
the Greek alphabet

moving quickly at an angle
like slicing through time—
like some kind of return

once a cedar cylinder gave way
to transparent plastic in
Sputnik colors—
what comes after styli?
shifting electrons?
the death of bird song?
or the continuation of
its mechanical reproduction?

[184]

experiments go awry
blinding flashes streak
across the empty sky
turning chaos
into anarchy

sudden smell of fear

in these days will
capitalism's final flunkies
try to find their way
backstage?

gouty feet shod in
the skins of species
now extinct

under unknown aurorae
gold-leaf pattern embossed
on an old book
detailing rituals
outlining transformations

[185]

changing average temperatures
and the malicious
promise of authority

replaying a sequence of
stylized poses—
analyzing them
frame by frame

strategic placement
of redundant drives
and logarithmic growth
in computations per second

no more discernable gaps
but still this inexplicable
queasiness as if
my central processor
has no other way
to process this data

[186]

certain energies cannot
be mechanically produced—
a rhythmic sound
like a heartbeat
pulses metallicly—
distant sound of gold
and a preponderance
of round forms

this growing sickness
is immune to modern treatments
the dull ache—the sense of weight

precursors of transformation

[187]

sounds from a scratchy recording
of some hymns to Orpheus
coming from the weedy lot
behind the gas station

amidst cans and wrappers and
losing lottery tickets
beady eyes examine pages
torn from pornographic magazines

yesterday the sound of Venus
(a round sound)
was a necessary distraction

Aquarian drawings announce
another numbered sequence

they are dead-eyed
these operators of machinery

in distant harbors
horns sound—
there gulls surely circle
looking for crumbs

here bent minds
animate worn photos
while the message fails to come

[188]
disarticulated scripture
this temporal prophecy

a cassette starting and
stopping chopping
words into meaningless
(or meaningful) tones

for the fresco depicting
the creation on the ceiling
has fallen in and
its sticky plaster-dust
has coated the capstan rollers

why keep pressing 'play'?

a hunk of unhewn stone
from out of nowhere
sits upon the ground
with a silent baritone gravitas

the charismatics have fallen
into their own traps but
the doors to the anchorites'
cells are opening