

No, I mean I really want you to live forever.

with thanks to Tongo

Whoever looted these acres where I muse
lorded the bird's-eyed horizon & challenged
your peasant spine to catapult feelings
of human being beyond his walls. Then came
the advent of philanthropy. In anthropology
I defer to a study of people that means to exceed
people. It's poetic that way: it can make an AR-15
a metaphor for a poor boy. He has rights
to missing limbs, parking lots, executive arms.
You were once a people farm. You had a heart
hacked into the likeness of a terrorist
on horseback. I came, I cut that heart out
& I named you City Park. Some days
I'm reminded to adore you as though you are
bones on display, or selected poems.
The state of our union is debased & alone.
You can tell from its tone that this poem intends
to outlive both of us & we are energized
to give up a good, long life to literature
in this hemisphere, yet here you are still
believing we're in any condition to literally
love. I vomit back in the gullet of
a university notes from the front of a struggle
it wants, violence it maintains like its own
police force. Would bacon ever bring *you* home?

What shimmers in humors of lachrymator agents
is job security, mirage of exhaustive categories
of first Black capitalists. On earth, we briefly
thought the way out was off the earth.
I thought the way was through radical academic
self-help. I protest; I fail to disperse until
the lawyer professes I am a professor,
have professional successes & publication credit
freedom papers. At graduate commencement, we
decree my decommissioning. Let's call it
a Persephone schism. It isn't sexy
when I wear my amnesia & assorted fatigues.
When we come to the end of this innocence
tenure, my love, let me blaze into blood-thirst
& sleep in my dirt. Forever is a nervous
disorder & cavernous discipline: Retire
& it rots you. Resign & they bill you
& it will continue. Premature death's
a true national debt. I put my whole life
in my mouth for money that heads to the landlords
& feds on schedule, so it pays me to tell you
more elaborate lies: I want you to live a forever
in this museum of our unmaking,
guarding the perimeter of extinction-witness industry,
lunching in the coffeeshop on your mom's old block
serving egg bites & seasonal flavors of tasers.
Everywhere you used to go to church, it hurts.
After all this, I must think prayer works,
I just don't feel like anyone who makes me buy time
isn't killing me to sell me what's already mine.