

# The Burnt Woman of Harvard

aka

## Transcendental Pornography

By Kirk Wood Bromley

### Glamatis Perspectae:

Alex –Harvard student  
Bishy – Harvard student  
Clara –Harvard student  
Gordon – Harvard student  
Haydon – Harvard student  
Helen – Harvard hopeful  
John Brown – Big Man Off Campus  
Lyuba and Zhazha – Russian e-mail brides  
Mark –Harvard student  
Megan – The burnt woman  
Professor Hazlitt – Harvard English Professor  
WJ – Harvard hopeful  
Students, hopefuls, bouncer, gas men

*Scene 1 – A Harvard classroom. Enter Professor Hazlitt, Mark, Alex, Clara, Haydon, and others.*

Prof - And so the central question of this course  
Comes from turning the poet on himself:  
Is beauty truth, truth beauty? Is that all  
We know on earth and all we need to know?

Clara - Beauty is truth once you've seen true beauty.

Alex - Beauty's of aesthesis, truth of logos,  
This personal, that verifiable,  
And as their synthesis occasions ethics,  
So their equivalence dolocracy.

Mark - I find myself compelled to side with...

Clara - Clara.

Mark - To look on beauty is to know the truth,  
As thru each captious vision we relive  
Those vital adaptations whereby sense  
Foreclosed us slow to all but what attracts,  
That we emerge a striving to convene  
With beauty's logic, which equilibrates  
Our free ambition to our true desire.

Alex - To say that we see only what we wish  
Prevents an unwisht view from being seen  
Thru truth-indicial lies, not valid links,  
And claiming how we see is what we see's  
Like wearing glasses just to see the glass.

Prof - This course is called the Agony of Keats.

Mark - Yet ecstasy so gesturates his tropes.

Alex - Ecstasy's the flame, agony the fuel  
Of Keats's torrid probe. Is joy not purer  
Filtered thru some grief? The fiercer the storm,  
The clearer the skies once havoc's run,  
As adverse aspects clashing neutralize  
In juncture to the span of their divergence.  
What of ugly truths? How happens horror  
Less ecstasy misrule our agony?

Haydon - The question is how happens truth and beauty  
When each seems antithetical to each,  
And for that, parse the poet, not the poem.  
To pathiate false truth and awful beauty,  
Live in lonely slip, agony ecstatic,  
Wild want your guide, chaos certainty,  
Granting force of self to selfless symbols,  
Your cordon to create as you delete  
Senses intimate thru alien sense,  
Your body bent against embodiment,  
Loving pure illusory relations,  
Concocting of this mess a true ideal  
While dying daily for the unlived life,  
This quandary's the asylum of the lyricist.  
Not truth in beauty, but peace in paradox  
Compels the poet's symptom-urge, which we  
Ivy-choked critics never could endure.

Mark - Some of us are poets.

Haydon - Why are you here?

Mark - To learn the art.

Haydon - The art is lived, not learned.  
Prof - Let's read the poem in which the art is lived  
To learn if its answer earns its question,  
Starting to my right.

*During the reading of the stanza, Megan, outside, enters and exits.*

Alex - "Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:"  
Haydon - "What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape  
Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?"  
Clara - "What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?  
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?"

*The bell rings.*

Prof - What all we must tomorrow sleuth again.  
Clara, if I may, a moment's conference.

*The class disperses and Clara talks with Professor Hazlitt.*

Mark - Did you see that woman?  
Alex - And ever do.  
Mark - Where?  
Alex - Before me, like some precocious dessert,  
Fattening our souls on empty penuche;  
Behind me, Queen Bikini on a float,  
All waves and smiles and onlyfans galore;  
Above me, petrol rainbows over scum;  
And yes, down there, like my goddess's corpse;  
I see her everywhere except in me,  
But me? I'm not bitter. She's my suite mate.  
Mark - You room with her?  
Alex - Thus, like truth and beauty,  
Tho opposite, we're commonly confused.  
Mark - How did she get that way?  
Alex - Like anything  
That always gets its way: luck and lunges.  
Mark - If that is luck, she should have lunged away.  
Alex - Maybe she'll lunge at you, Mr. Lucky.  
Mark - What good is all this glib? Are you so close  
To her imperative callosity  
Your natural affinity's resistant  
To such sadness?  
Alex - How sad to be so hot  
That all desire to touch you. Hey, I know:  
Write her a poem and I'll deliver it:  
"O Clara, let me tongue your thermal coil  
And spike that cool coulis to heavy boil."  
Mark - I didn't mean...  
Alex - To play me like the slots?  
I like your thinking, Mark, but not your thoughts.

*All exit, save Mark.*

Mark - I was fresh at Harvard, undeclared.  
A fine free beam of calorescing love  
My spirit yawed, genteely plundering  
Arcane tradition for impressured poise  
To vitrify my aggregates to voice,  
Yet most in all did I at beauty needle.  
Nectant for her nectarous shivaree,  
My organs gaped to swill the native dope,  
Til vision, that shallow trick-directrix  
Of our intentions, hemisphered my urge.  
O little did I know how deeply ran  
Sensation's rare reserves! To be so swung  
From avid hungering to full revulsion  
In single space, such terrible delight  
Crushing while securing my larval life,  
Wild pagodas of serenity  
Decaying from within, and my decay  
Into beauty blooming. Which shall I choose  
To interlock with truth? O let it be  
Bet beauty that produces all our bliss!  
Yet there's the catch: if bliss must be produced,  
Its precedent's forlorn veracity.  
How meatish and unprized she calmly moved  
Across the mental eden we construct  
Of arrogant and mumbling arrivistes,  
Snailing hush about the sumptuous set,  
A bleak angel bearing senseless stigma  
Of subterfuge, her scalded, hopeless wings  
Conducting a choir of silent cackles  
That mock human hope. Looking half at her  
You felt the mounting of a failed birth:  
The harried midwife, universitas;  
The sweatbox mother, calm exclusive she;  
The choking child, you, hurtling wordward  
Out the dribbling caul, a puzzled phyton  
Shrieking, "If this is life, I deign to die."  
For O how you, how all who saw her there  
Were gazing crusht beneath their trite ideals.  
Are we secluded analysts so hookt  
On surgery's comelier dividends  
That sensual embellish seizes us  
Before our tongues may taste the rancid oils  
That she osmotes from her refusing form?  
Can these decortic, quarantining eyes  
Ever phase away her warning placard  
On our cathartic rubble, baiting us  
To hope's high drudgery? Must craving mind  
Dizzy downward drill into the vomit  
Of crassing's meal to scrape one scrap of truth  
Valued alone as self-disgust delights  
In our disrepaired imagination?  
Gape away! There's no peace in paradox,  
No sense in an agonized ekstasis.

You, the poet, must beauty's secrets plunge  
To mine of priceless truth the mother lode,  
And's none can quell a voice that screams when shusht,  
Here mark my word: my words shall hit her mark.  
I will not be by ugliness unmothered.  
I will of beauty breathe and not be smothered.  
To her I will convert all truth uncovered  
When first I saw the burnt woman of Harvard.

*All exit.*

*Scene 2 - Harvard campus. Enter Harvard Hopefuls waiting for a tour, Helen and WJ among them.*

WJ - Ain't it heaven?  
Helen - Ain't?  
WJ - It heaven?  
Helen - It is empyrean to those refined enough to solemnize its apocatastasis.  
WJ - Its afrozappawhatsis?  
Helen - Apocatastasis, a neologe of the toddler church, indicating the renaissance of the condemned to redemption, from apo, as in up, and catastasis, as in return.  
WJ - Not-on-the-admissions-test, a red flag to the Harvard Hopeful, necessitating an absence of attention to the subject matter, from subject, as in me, and matter, as in don't.  
Helen - You're a Harvard Hopeful?  
WJ - It's my safety school.  
Helen - SAT?  
WJ - Perfect. You?  
Helen - Same.  
WJ - GPA?  
Helen - Perfect. You?  
WJ - Same.  
Helen - Adversity score?  
WJ - Favorably disadvantaged. You?  
Helen - Same.  
WJ - Legacy?  
Helen - None. You?  
WJ - Same.  
Helen - Awards? Activities? References?  
WJ - Class president, valedictorian, 17 charities, every letter alum. You?  
Helen - Same.  
WJ - So, we're the same.  
Helen - Ain't.

*Enter Bishy and Gordon.*

Bishy - Harvard Hopefuls, fall in line.  
Gordon - Welcome to the world's most prestigious university.  
Bishy - The sanctum of scholars.  
Gordon - The primer of presidents.  
Bishy - The ivory tower atop the ivory tower.  
Both - Harvard.

Gordon - I'm Gordon Mangusta Lavish III, pre-law and posthaste senator from the great state of Unleash the Power Struggle Within.

Bishy - Bishy Beaucoup, chemopolitical fitness imagineering major with an emphasis on the problematic intersectionality between fixed amphibian gender propaganda and structural racism denial in suburban America's non-existent foreign language immersives.

Gordon - And we will be your tour guides thru....

Bishy - Wimme now...

All - Harvard.

Gordon - Mmmm, feels like getting a Macarthur Genius Grant without all that "being a genius" shiz.

Bishy - Shiz is not a word we use at Harvard, Gordy.

Gordon - I misapologize.

Bishy - You'll have to forgive Gordon. His great great second cousin went to BU, so he's got some tissues.

Gordon - Your grandfather's third adopted son went to Tufts.

Bishy - He was born with a congenital brain disorder that prevented him from forming sentences.

Gordon - I bet they taught him to say, "I went to Tufts."

Bishy - Shall we continue the tour or take this to arbitration?

Gordon - I'm good. You?

Bishy - Oui, sin, ia, tak, hai, da, si.

Gordon - Christo et ecclesiae.

Bishy - So, Gordy, whence the perfection that is...

All - Harvard.

Bishy - Did I say "wimme now," Gordy?

Gordy - No, nah, nope, nicht, nay, not, nippers.

Bishy - Learn to listen, Harvard Hopefuls, or learn to work at a job.

Gordy - Job is not a word we use at Harvard, Bishy.

Bishy - Shiz now.

Gordy - Good job.

Bishy - So, I repeat, whence the perfection that is Harvard, Gordy?

Gordon - For my money, and I repeat, not your money, it's the high demand low supply exclusivity wherein chummy connections preserve the innovative class.

WJ - Yet haven't many leading innovators dropped out of Harvard to pursue more promising apparitions?

Bishy - Apparitions?

Gordon - Your name?

WJ - WJ Bate.

Bishy - You wanna go to Harvard, Welfare State?

WJ - Oui, ja, si, ho, hi, ho, yes.

Gordon - Then let me nip and tuck your flabby chances with some 1% wikidis. While prematurely ejaculating one's "self" from Harvard may on rare occasions lead to a financially pregnant exile, not getting into Harvard will on all occasions lead to being a non-trending whysexual bitchagaloop porch monkey apparition with a position at "Must be Tufts to BU."

*Enter Professor Hazlitt.*

Bishy - But, hey, let's do some insider grading.

Gordon - Professor Hazlitt!

Bishy - Eminent Harvard didact.

Gordon - Redundancy check!

Bishy - Professor, what character trait is most valued at Harvard?

Prof - The ability to look down on others while bending over.  
 Gordon - What's the principle benefit of going to Harvard?  
 Prof - When someone tells you to go to hell, you don't have to change dorms.  
 Helen - Any superciliously gyrencephalic sesquipedalianisms on getting into everybody's dream school?  
 Bishy - Your name?  
 Helen - Helen Vendler.  
 Gordon - Well, Smelly Blender...  
 Prof - If you think getting into Harvard is hard, try getting out of it. The value of an education is inversely related to its abolition on anxiety, and the crimson prison only wraps you in irrelevant to ship you to submissive so you can spend the rest of your safe life feeding a communal echo chamber with the critical content it pumps out your cue-tooth mouth speaker. Forget Harvard and go to Beauty School, where you'll actually learn something useful, like how to be hot without burning yourself, cuz if you get that, I'll get you into Harvard.  
 Bishy - To the rec room!

*All exit, save Helen and WJ.*

WJ - Where are you going?  
 Helen - To Harvard.  
 WJ - The tour is this way.  
 Helen - The door is that way.  
 WJ - If you know something I don't know...  
 Helen - If?  
 WJ - We're compadres, right?  
 Helen - We are competitors.  
 WJ - Competitor is Harvardian for compadre.  
 Helen - If that's a joke, you're a joke.  
 WJ - Hey, I'm Harvard material!  
 Helen - Harvard material is not a word we use at Harvard, WJ.  
 WJ - Harvard material is two words, not one word.  
 Helen - Wow, I didn't know that.  
 WJ - My dad will recall his genes if I don't get in.  
 Helen - My mom will suck back her milk if I don't get in.  
 WJ - Damn, ever kiss someone then wonder where you got it?  
 Helen - What was Professor Hazlitt's prolocution in response to my impressively palaverous interrogative?  
 WJ - I was so unoppressed by your oversensitive pilobolus, I forget.  
 Helen - He said, "Forget Harvard and go to Beauty School."  
 WJ - Did you break your sarcasm sensor hitting the books?  
 Helen - And what did he say after that?  
 WJ - I'd remember it were it memorable.  
 Helen - He said, "Where you'll actually learn something useful, like how to be hot without burning yourself."  
 WJ - I don't want to be hot; I want to go to Harvard.  
 Helen - And after that he said?  
 WJ - "Could you take a little more off the bangs"?  
 Helen - "Cuz if you get that, I'll get you into Harvard."  
 WJ - Cosmetology is a trade, Helen. You do hair. With your hands. Just thinking about it gives me never hives on my guaranteed six-figure income.

Helen - And the Beauty School is an off-campus invite-only rave house frequented by certain incognito pupils and pedagogues, including Gordon, Bishy, and Professor Hazlitt.

WJ - Howbout you get to the point so I can stick you with it?

Helen - Ad coetum per coetum cum coetu.

WJ - Coetum is not a word we use at Harvard, Helen.

Helen - Is your school even ranked?

WJ - We emphasize invention over retention.

Helen - You should emphasize learning over stupid.

WJ - And you should emphasize staying on topic over get off my pervasive untidy tuxedo.

Helen - "Through the club's club to the club."

WJ - Brilliant academic careers don't start in shady shake joints. This normy's back on tour.

*He goes to exit.*

Helen - The trail of same ends at the fail of lame.

WJ - I'm dresst for a panel interview, not casual intercourse.

Helen - Hip is in the head.

WJ - That must be why people turn their heads when I shake my hips.

Helen - Enter party, locate professor, yourname@heaven.edu in perpetuum.

WJ - I'm sorry, but if I've learned anything as a star student, it's drooping your pants doesn't put you over the moon.

Helen - Ok, but I'm warning you: 56% of the applicants on that tour are fortunately disadvantaged.

WJ - Is fortunately higher than favorably?

Helen - Way.

WJ - Fine, but you best be right.

Helen - Wrong's the only am that ain't my jam.

*All exit.*

*Scene 3 - The Beauty School. Enter John Brown.*

JB - Lyuba? Zhazha? Why am I alone?

*Enter Lyuba.*

Lyuba - Johnny, Zhazha making fun for me.

JB - Of you, baby, of you.

Lyuba - Who is Uvya Baby? Johnny have three girls now? Two girls already too many sweater zeppelins for pleasure cruise go peanut butter legs. O I am jealousy suede!

JB - The phrase, you cream soda vending machine, is Zhazha's making fun of me.

Lyuba - But Lyuba make more cheese pagoda bending moustache for Johnny's funemy, no?

*Enter Zhazha.*

Zha - What you hotbox now, menthol man? Nyet! I will pavement pizza what strokahontas flumps bad danish on our imax and climax!

Lyuba - Stinky reverse meat face.

Zhazha - Covid zumba toitch!  
 JB - Ladies, can we please squeeze less partisan lemon on the belly bumping membrane? His holiness is getting into character for the coming throw down.

Zha - Then donion ring that taco bumper and we be nuggin doobage.  
 Lyuba - Hate goggle that swamp donkey and we be stinky weaselteats.  
 Zha - Am I not your butter diamond nooby fluff?  
 Lyuba - Am I not your koyal kitty breastoraunt?  
 Zha/Lyu - Why you have two womans, Johnny Brown?  
 JB - I done crooned that lewd awakening so many timorous moons I got thirst traps on my alabama wrecking balls, but since the hyposaurus has clearly walmarted your thunk trunks, I'll encore my manstake. Burnt out on skimming dehydrate instructions while I'm tryna big the dipper – like you can't doodle a yankee or whistle that dixie nowadays without some ten course discourse on the patrimonial evils of the coy smile – I went scuba for new crab danglers thru the cyber seas of shippable shag, and there I found yous twos.

Zha/Lyu - But which one you find the firstest?  
 JB - That statue's been antifa'd, but beaver eager that I was, I musta double clickt, cuz next I know, boo for the price of won: Lyuba Beluga Vonbehindovitch and Zhazha Boozombas Ontopsky, deuce nutrajuice for great American astronaut, so since our moonwalks are mondo boffo, let's wander off the psychopath, loosen that chocko knot, and set some wooden spoons up in this carnival spread, cuz...

*You are both beautiful to me.  
 You are both beautiful to me.  
 Can't you see?  
 You're much more than I paid for,  
 And you got no DMZ,  
 But you are both beautiful to me.*

*Enter Haydon.*

JB - Haydon, how was Hahvahd?  
 Hay - Stupefyingly educational.  
 JB - That's the IV league: drip, drip, thesis, teacher, tenure, coma, drip.  
 Hay - The university's a great idea full of bad ones, the worst of which is letting students speak.  
 Lyuba - What Haytem say?  
 Hay - Haytem say, Sex Slave Barbie, what you're too biodebatable to absorb, and while I'd love to stay and lob inanities over the multiculti net, I must study.

Zhazha - Study?  
 JB - It means "little stud."  
 Hay - And study is to stud as poetry is to poet; when the latter abandons the former, it hunts itself into extinction.  
 JB - Speaking of witches, may I read you mine, thou laconic lord of life after laughter?  
 Hay - Your what?  
 JB - My poem, if I may be so brash as to classify the compositions of chaos.  
 Hay - You wrote a poem?

JB - No, I wrought a poem out of adamantine ambivalence, and though it's been a bit since I footed about in antipodal directions, I so metric.

Hay - Does it employ the six requisite qualities of excellent verse, or is it more licentious libido rodeo yeeha?

JB - Refresh my malady with the six esculent cavities of the rabbinic curse and I shall answer to the west of my abrasively.

Hay - What?

JB - Are the six requisite qualities of excellent verse, Mister Tongue Lister?

Hay - Ethos, or an assertion of value.

JB - My words assert the value of my words, tho making much of risks making less from.

Hay - Mythos, or a synthesis of times.

JB - I penned it then, it pens me now, I am the myth of synthesis!

Hay - Dianoia, or discursive thought.

JB - This cursing thot or that cursing thot, non morirò di noia!

Hay - Does it possess melody?

JB - Well, I happen to know melody, and she will only be possessed by those possessed of her, so that simplicity's complicated.

Hay - Spectra, or image?

JB - There's more to view in my verse than in the vastness that vernackled it.

Hay - Diction?

JB - Nay, my song shall never shun its seminal stock of sound.

Hay - If it's at all scatologic, I shall be irkt in the extreme.

JB - You, Haydon, have an extremity?

Hay - I have only what you push me to.

JB - Then let me push you off the ledge that hangs over all you'd have.

Hay - Let you.

JB - "A Lament upon the Permanence of Transient Hope."

Hay - Well, I'm surprisingly impressed. Quite neo-romantic, nearly pre-Raphaelite, with a transcendental finish. Go on.

JB - I will go on and off as off and on I ever go, on the verge of a nervous vacation, so off book I upstage myself, on the off train, off the real story, in an off and on affair with my on again off again auto au pair, on it til I'm so damn off it gets on me for bein all promise perverse, all trite brite, all off my rocker cuz I'm knockin off more on something than the pile of regurgitated revolts, muddling scoff and yawn and nope, I'm blank. My brain's been durchgefueckt by its own borderline. Drugs very good in moment, but very bad for moment. Come, my pussy whips: I've swallowed melpomene, and need my stomach pumpt.

Hay - You were once a poet, John, of serious potential.

JB - Potential's parasitic, and serious plus serious is seriously.

Hay - You taught me to seek a higher beauty.

JB - No, I said get high and yeet that booty.

Hay - These foreign holdings have devalued your currency.

JB - These holdings are domestic enough to endow my private sector with the liquidity I need to grow in a protracted depression, and crap for the carp, right, Haymosabe?

Hay - Crap for the carp, but you are a man whose mind is the endless echo of imperceptible time, so must you savor the symbol's odic nutris beyond all the moribund webcest glitz of gluttonous graceland if you wish to be more than a skittish animal.

JB - I am not an animan, I am a manimal.  
Hay - "If steady you stood at the whipping sea,  
Absorbing the ancient, algic swells  
Thru every eager lacerated pore,  
And at the mystery-sprinkling moon,  
Whose serene remarks human havocs hush,  
You cast your spirit up in exaltation  
Repeating the desire of landed life  
To own an ecumene of aerial truth,  
And, in a language you believe distilled  
From compounds nature resinates to ease  
Our grinding, lame attempts at reclamation,  
You freed the liquid fossils of your doubt  
Into the wild immediate tidal now,  
What measure of effusion would you employ  
To gauge the inlets of your urgent flow  
That feeds this drive to die where none may know?"  
John Wesley Brown, Ode to Shame, date denied.  
JB - That could not have been further from the couth.  
Hay - She loved that poem.  
JB - And if you love your life, you'd be wise to go dumb.  
Hay - I simply sound the silence in your head, which says Megan.  
JB - I will eat your head and shit your better.  
Hay - Better than eat my heart and shit your worst.  
Zha - Who is Negan?  
JB - Negan is the Nymph of Negativity. Too often taken for an  
academic's anonymous smoker's station, she drags her blistered  
bulk about the cerebral quarantine cages of Cambridge En-  
Masse in search of aspiring cynics to terrify into heterophobic  
homeothesis, and the only way to extinguish her admonitional  
glower is to throw a Burning Man Rave, which just so happens to  
be this evening's oddity, so come, ye cyberian hussies, we must  
point the purple laser of love at our green-eyed cornea and carve  
a new perception. O, and as for you, Haytem, life is like a box of  
high cheekbones: the nauseating remains of a model home, so  
keep a lid on it lest I lock you in it.

*All exit.*

*Scene 4 – Harvard Campus. Enter Mark.*

Mark - This mind on win her will must now be set  
To gain a double pay off at the line:  
My poetry envigored by the bet;  
My mark its winner's cup when she is mine.

*Enter Alex, to the side.*

Alex - Behold the poet on his pedestal;  
O were I holding him, yet here or there  
I sense a scrape: if here, he is not there,  
Yet there, I'm too of here. So, status, sate.  
Mark - Praise is her fuel, yet that's so daily juiced,  
Might she not crave a respite in critique,  
Some zipper trigg'ring with its charge new spark?  
There is a pact in dreamt-of deception

Sustaining a jolt of proof that desire,  
 Drunk on her drippings, petty objection  
 Over-rules and flows in stoppered judgment,  
 Less guided by the truth than by the tooth.

Alex -  
 No looking can downwind the weward blast  
 That I would give my every feather to.  
 Yet how not look? He looks to be lookt at,  
 Tho looking not at me, as I too lack  
 The beauty every poet needs to see.

Mark -  
 Yet love a liar? Lies in love unwrench  
 The fundive pact, as word-born's word-bereft.  
 Then honesty's the hitch, yet how be straight  
 With she whose stuff is show, who is the cause  
 Of craft and cunning, artifies our essence?

Alex -  
 He is a man, and poet, which is all  
 That's good in man; upon rapacity,  
 He rapture pours; his love's not brief, but loves  
 To lengthen love. Defensiveness destroys  
 The courage-caged, yet the scissured poet  
 Thru ringent, brave submission wins the world  
 Then hands it back, perfected thru his pain.

Mark -  
 Indifference! Ah, such beauty can't resist,  
 For who on admiration feeds soon freaks  
 When board's withdrawn, and surplus quickly begs  
 From her once beggar. Yet, handouts returned,  
 Her begging's ended, arrogance grows fat,  
 And indifference upon indifference spits.

Alex -  
 O you effusive tropaion, jutting forth  
 The hedric symbiant of rich despair,  
 How I would flounce you, rub you cross my face,  
 Force you spate of my imagined wiles,  
 Ingest your mania, and feel no more  
 Misplacement, finally by you freedom-held,  
 In cuddle bard embracing that my sulk  
 Arouses wide as O as wide as you,  
 My grind-piping, deep-stirring, mad delivery man.

Mark -  
 Why not simple awe? Supreme subservience?  
 Yet who can crave whose craving is so huge  
 There's no craving space? Maybe my approach  
 Of acting on her cue is off; my aim  
 Should be to speak the beauty in my urge  
 For hers to show in selfish selflessness  
 That we are one.

Alex -  
 O unendurable dream!  
 Why must I ever wish what never will?  
 Why strain my soul to leap a sky-high fence?  
 Why squeg and scream at fact? What shorts my brain  
 To bid on what my body can't afford?  
 I'd be his briefest beauty, yet I want  
 To my want the means. I'm too poorly made,  
 Too greatly failed at all I really want,  
 And while I'm on this looted stage of life,  
 I play for no one, and so sappy show  
 My truth, my caste, my all is ugliness.

Mark -  
 What does beauty need? Beauty needs beauty,  
 And here's her only flaw: flawless, she is stuck

In self requiring far extolling selves  
 That even her condign supremacy  
 Must justify her thru some equity.

Alex - Why ugly? O don't ask. The answer comes  
 More ugly, as it's full an ugly past,  
 While now is but an ugly moment managed.

Mark - So I'll be her equal, pose for poesie,  
 And weave her such a writhe that she will reel,  
 With my free rein rosette, as in my sense  
 Her sense-beyond's incensed. O I will sing  
 Her shine, grown hotter, sharper magnified;  
 Her depth, which on my tether she may plunge;  
 Her image, thru my imagery elicit;  
 Her rhythms, by my cadence animized;  
 Her wishes in my fictions palpable,  
 I'll draw her all devotedly to me.

Alex - My lacking looks disrupt this poet's eye  
 By being truer than he seeks to see,  
 Nor should he, as it's beauty sets him on.

Mark - I will call my poem "An Ode to Beauty."  
 Alex - So let him be, a poet, beautiful,  
 For I would be too true to my malform  
 To try where beauty best admires itself.

*She goes to exit.*

Mark - Clara's roomie. The harsher the route,  
 The sweeter the view, and she's my sherpa.  
 Alex! Mark.

Alex - Mark.

Mark - From the Agony of Keats.

Alex - Right, Mark, and his gospel of the gorgeous.

Mark - I've been thinking long and hard on what you said  
 And I think you're right.

Alex - I'm right about what?

Mark - That beauty isn't truth, truth not beauty.

Alex - Then you've come to your senses, not my side,  
 As a man's senses never let him stay  
 Where what he senses after isn't sense,  
 So my said was surrendered when you spoke.

Mark - And there you go, in contra sense my fix:  
 You are so beautiful and speak so true,  
 Tho your words have severed truth and beauty.

Alex - Then you're blind and say only what you'd see,  
 So any truth I show is lost on you.

Mark - And there you go again, declaring dark,  
 Thru subtext antithetic, the bold rebuff  
 Of your daresay's gloping opposition,  
 Yet the speaker is the short of the speech,  
 So what are you? A woman, beautiful,  
 Whose truth is this: that beauty is untrue?  
 A paradox (where poets are at peace),  
 Awful to surmise, easy on the eyes,  
 Lamping the quest: Can eye and why be one  
 When every sight swindles their connection?  
 Looking on you now, I see the answer's yes,

At least when looking on you, as I see  
 Your beauty's truth by being so untrue  
 To itself (though, of course, in conscious ruse),  
 Which means both are right: beauty's false to be  
 So true and true to be false to itself,  
 Unswindling all the swindlers with its grace.  
 Beautiful, Alex. Truly beautiful.

Alex - Your cute device disproves its own deny  
 As such an ugly lie shows beauty's truth.

Mark - What lie?

Alex - You do not think me beautiful.

Mark - Yeah, right.

Alex - Yeah, right.

Mark - I know you want to hide  
 Inside your head, an intellect at heart,  
 But I say come on out and show the world  
 That beauty's freedom fires nature's foundry.

Alex - I'm hiding from the inside of your head.

Mark - Alex, why?

Alex - Whatever you are after  
 By teasing me will have its way with you,  
 And that way will be worse than you to me.

Mark - Teasing you? Teasing takes imperfection,  
 But there's no take on you I wouldn't keep.

Alex - I simply do not know how you can know  
 How cruel you are and yet still be so cruel.  
 To call me beautiful when all can see  
 That's all I cannot be? Or could not be,  
 For next your ugliness I'm beauty's best,  
 So thank you, no, thank me for letting me  
 Like you, find you beautiful, even though  
 I knew the truth when you askt of Clara  
 After class, so I guess that hits the toe:  
 We know alone by knowing not to know.

Mark - I guess you didn't see the burnt woman.

Alex - The what?

Mark - It's she I askt of after class.

Alex - The burnt woman? I thought you meant Clara.

Mark - Who's Clara?

Alex - Stop lying.

Mark - I'm not lying.  
 A burnt woman passt by our class today  
 And stared at me when that one girl read Keats.

Alex - That's Clara.

Mark - The burnt woman?

Alex - That one girl.

Mark - Ok, that's Clara.

Alex - A burnt woman?

Mark - A burnt woman.

Alex - O how sad.

Mark - Sadness past all power to see past.

Alex - Was she badly burnt?

Mark - Her entire body  
 Was with such a blinding badness lacquered,  
 Its image felt some cribbing pleistoforce  
 That spiny slithers deep into your skull

And yanks your optic nerve into its den  
That you no more detect what you detect  
As urge and hope and all perspectives crash  
Into frescos of enucleation.  
Her skin was carmelized, magmatic, charred  
Like some desquamate rotisserie goat  
Forgotten by the durnks who skewered it,  
No ears, a few stray hairs, those brashly tippt  
By a red carnation, lips seared away  
That center faced a toothy jackal jeer,  
Her mouth no more the broker to her moods,  
And both her hands, those gnarled carbon stubs,  
Seemed poker sticks for stirring lambent coals.  
Over this incineration, she wore  
A delft flower dress, so slight and skimpy  
All hapless viewers funnel forcefully  
Thru her rack-heap, and thus she proudly slithes  
Along, more ancient than amputation,  
Yet freshly burnt, all burnt, as burnt's a bug  
That crawls into a log to flee the flames.  
I call her woman for my peace; for truth?  
To call her aught but burnt's to torch the tongue.

Alex -

Mark -

Why tell me this?  
Imagine being her.

No intimacy save with what you scare,  
As all who face your blazing dreadful sense  
The horrid, febrile, life-beguiling suplice  
Of that grievous conflagration cauterized  
Your flesh into a mesh of worse majeure,  
Reliving day on day a frozen hell  
Whose cackling flues forever wiped you out  
The social print, not just to sulk alone  
But be the cause of loneliness in all.  
Imagine being her, then say to me  
That I'm untrue to call you beautiful.

Alex -

Dear boy, there being plaudits you won't sing  
Assures no perfect pitch to those you do.

*She goes to exit.*

Mark -

You maybe up for going out tonight?

Alex -

I'm going to a party with Clara.

Mark -

Cool, can I come too?

Alex -

With me or her?

Mark -

With you.

Alex -

Eight o'clock at the Beauty School.

Mark -

I'm there.

Alex -

You should talk to her.

Mark -

Clara?

Alex -

The burnt woman.

Mark -

Ah, ya know, I doubt I'll see her again.

Alex -

O, you'll see her again. She lookt at you.

*Alex exits.*

Mark -

It shows an aberrant ugliness in me

To lie to her, tho I lie beautifully.  
 And of that beauty she so clearly covets,  
 Well, I desire it too, and here, ok,  
 True beauty makes me false, subsuming all  
 In its hot pursuit, yet what guilty of?  
 Panting after pants? Gaping after gaps?  
 Such dereliction tinctures to acquittal,  
 For universal wrong is innocence,  
 Or, what's the same, defenselessly condemned,  
 As consciousness itself's mere concoction  
 Of dodge and dupe to sack the stunner's wand.  
 Besides, thru this trompe l'oeil, the poet peers,  
 For how in outback beauty shall he sleep  
 Less from the trail of truth he venture off,  
 Which bucks my stand, yet need coherence nulls.  
 This Claracquire drives me so deadly on,  
 I'd parch the planet for one sloppy lick.  
 It's sad I must hurt Alex, tho, as she  
 Seems wildly wise and one I'd seek perhaps  
 Were she not seeded to a Clara match,  
 Were I not like all likers striking struck.  
 Lit on life, we must burn our peers to see  
 Who is meant for truth, and who for beauty.

*All exit.*

*Scene 5 – Clara and Alex's dorm room. They enter.*

Clara - So, you parst the poet?  
 Alex - Only his title: Ode on Scoring You.  
 Clara - Take him. I'm bookt for teacher.  
 Alex - Clara, please, no more sex scandals. Like how's a scholar to keep  
 his seat with yr dirty fergy all up in his rigor?  
 Clara - Nah, that's one faculty member whose member's got no faculty,  
 but he's our barcode to the Beauty School.  
 Alex - Good, cuz their rejection letter was clippt to my birth certificate.  
 Clara - This is a job for Princess Percodan.

*She offers Alex a pill.*

Alex - Thanks, but pain's the only part of me I can stand.  
 Clara - Buzz is the best beautician, Alex. See footnote me.  
 Alex - Your footnote has a citable body of research above it, while mine  
 references an endnote that recommends the reader see your  
 work.  
 Clara - In high school I won most likely to need more microwave.  
 Alex - Then some surgeon bought a beamer on your bill.  
 Clara - The secret is the Power Pussy Heat Sheet.  
 Alex - Your highness is high.  
 Clara - High enough to see how hot you'll be if you hit my heat.  
 Alex - Since this is Infeasible 101, do I get credit for failing?  
 Clara - Basic Bitch Mild: top so tight no one can breathe.  
 Alex - Bdonkadork.  
 Clara - Devious Hentai Medium: skirt so short it can't reach resist.  
 Alex - Will this call attention to my body, cuz every time I do that my  
 hopes hang up.

Clara - Albuquerque Hooker Inferno Chiquita: Shoes that say the stripper's now the pole.

Alex - And the pole is now at half-mast to honor the death of my pride.

Clara - Flaming Kamikaze Fire Tunnel Dragonista: more lipstick than a lamprey, eye shadow that says "there's room under my umbrella," and hair so there there's like hair in your hair.

Alex - Do I interdict myself? Very well, then I interdict myself. I'm a barge full of disquietudes.

Clara - Two Cats Fucking in a Woolen Sock Exploding Hellshit Carolina Reaper Rimjob Bar-b-Queen: your wiener steamer either rings the dinner bell or blows the bear horn, so tits commit, butt on jut, and move like the Louvre.

Alex - The Louvre would no doubt move if I sought entry.

Clara - Hey, pretty ain't all pretty.

Alex - I was pretty once.

Clara - You are pretty, Alex, you're just in the wrong clogs.

Alex - When I was six, this boy from across the cul-de-sac would come and swing on my swing. He was as luscious as an apple mid-air, and I would sit and watch him like a prairie dog worrying a storm, for I knew what I had to do to save our bountiful world of two, so I askt him.

Clara - Askt him what?

Alex - If we could kiss.

Clara - And?

Alex - Yes, but for each peck, he got something.

Clara - Something?

Alex - Something, as in anything.

Clara - Anything?

Alex - O we lived such a brief and sweet hereafter. Too freshly formed to partake of awkward difference, we simply reveled in minute explorations of summer's impartial, dewy pabulum, til his mother found us flush and huffing neath a wagon, he got grounded, I moved away, and memory's finest vintage attained its replenishing seal.

Clara - You were raped.

Alex - I was not.

Clara - Anything for a kiss? If that's not rape, man just grew a gavel.

Alex - I wasn't raped.

Clara - Then at least charge your next good night hunter a higher bagging fee.

Alex - I'd be unfenced and free if freedom came from playing to others.

Clara - And since when does it not? Since women of a certain rage spread the proctorial disease of "once rejected, always dejected" via their enflamed inhibitory glands, causing ambitious babes everywhere to adopt the stillborn, sterilizing belief that being desirable to what you openly crave is somehow demeaning while being despicable to what you secretly crave is somehow empowering, but Bechdel's a tanker's test, cuz freedom's dressing for the fetish.

Alex - Then why don't all the wires end in women?

Clara - Because woman is the why in the wires. What is it to walk on stage, and boom, it's your scene? It is power. To be the source of spontaneity in the wooden soul? Power. To rouse the nightly squalls that green the garden of dreams? Pow pow power.

Alex - Maybe I forgot to pay my bill.

Clara - So we re-up your utilities at the Beauty School.

*All exit.*

*Scene 6 - Outside the Beauty School. Enter Haydon.*

Haydon - O John, how much I want you as you were,  
To hear some raucid fervor you transcribe  
Into the most contained and glyptic notes  
That time is left in cuffs. How much to lounge  
In wait for perfect sentiment to rise  
That you might throw it farther than surreal  
And stun the stylish fluster with your lilt.  
O how much to see you gladd'ning Megan,  
Your charms conveyed, locutions unobscured,  
Your passions vying not at futile prize  
But jaunting thru the idioms of genius  
That knows of symmetry its nimblest twists.  
And am I wrong? Am I to be abjured  
For blandly cowering at your stilted soul,  
Each moment casting me the shutdown clown  
In hopes that you might brightly cheme again  
If only by reflection of my spite?  
My love's the shadow of some sheer nostalgia,  
Yet still I love, a fire that seeks to cool,  
A wrath that judges tender, washing clean  
With dioecious het the ornery scent  
Of every sludgy sickness you pursue,  
A love that sifts for gold in your scorcht guilt  
At faltering in Megan's helpful harsh  
Demands, that now, tho once a verse elite,  
You take pornography for poetry.  
See her again, you must. You must see her,  
Tho her smit trench of worship pull you down,  
For your sad life befouls beyond all death,  
As living you inflame corruption's fete.  
But how? I've tried with everything I am,  
So what of what I'm not? Might I put on  
A parody of your disconsolance,  
And making like emblazon buried shame  
To hit the switch before you self-destruct?  
Yet I be you, or worse than you? Are you  
Not just as far from what you were? Among  
Perfection imperfections most allure,  
And in our formulaic fame a flop  
Alone can sometimes penetrate. A flop?  
A freak? A mutant? Might I somehow mod  
To my vantage this great disadvantage?  
Like you abluded, seeking truth in trash,  
A gimp, a recidivist retraction,  
The self-defeated face that wins all funds,  
So fuckt he tucks in anywhere? A hork  
Endangered to the point of dangerous?  
The chiddys in their crudded cribs will shout,  
"That cryptoneurotic hyperencephalate  
Sleazo-slingin mook of edible shit,"  
And I'll be so more you than you dare be,

You'll re-revert to her by meeting me.  
Hellmouth, Hellmouth, rap me a trap,  
And stuff it up with rhymes that make the stiffies snap.  
Backbone, backbone, scan me a man,  
And trick him up with treats that sweet the nasty plan.  
I have crawl into the angel food.  
I am a prank fallen from the mothers.  
When you sleep, dweamers, I move your room and run.  
Dean of Danger, no one stranger,  
Square root of the negative one.

*He exits as the Dean of Danger.*

*Scene 7 – Outside the Beauty School. A boucer stands at the door. Enter Alex and Clara.*

Clara -               Oops, there it is. The Beauty School. Where Harvard's  
Community Guidelines go to die that truth might live. Take this.

*She offers her a pill.*

Alex -               What is it?

Clara -               What the stick-up artist means when he says I'm gonna miss you.

*Alex takes it. Enter Mark.*

Mark -               Is this the secret meeting of the Keats Society?

Clara -               Recite the patronym.

Mark -               “She dwells with beauty...”

Alex -               “Beauty that must die.”

Clara -               “And joy...”

Mark -               “Whose hand is ever at his lips...”

Alex -               “Whispering adieu.”

*Enter Professor Hazlitt.*

Prof -               Ah, Clara, you brought your peers.

Clara -               Peer on this, professor.

Mark -               We've been declaiming Keats.

Prof -               “Hard melodies are sweet.”

Alex -               “But those unheard are sweeter.”

Mark -               “Therefore, ye soft pipes, play on.”

Clara -               Soft pipes?

Prof -               Let them play on.

Alex -               “Not to the sensual ear.”

Mark -               “But, more endeared,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.”

Clara -               Ditties of no tone?

Mark -               Tone? Def.

Alex -               Zero for tone, ten for deaf.

Clara -               Rate my ditties, professor.

Mark -               The professor cannot profess the truth.

Alex -               Because he must choose beauty or his profession.

Prof -               Indeed, I rate thy ditties as berating me with the frustration that I  
may not venerate them without reinvigorating the administration  
in its aspirations to castrate my liberation.

Mark -               First rate.

Alex - Denigration.  
 Clara - "Fair youth, beneath the trees,  
 Never canst thou leave thy song."  
 Prof - "Nor ever can those trees be bare."  
 Alex - "Bold lover, never, ever canst thou kiss."  
 Mark - "Tho winning near the goal."  
 Prof - Near the goal? O my all but life!  
 Clara - "Yet do not grieve."  
 Alex - "She cannot fade."  
 Mark - "Tho thou hast not thy bliss."  
 Clara - "Forever wilt thou love."  
 Alex - "And she be fair."

*They step up to the door.*

Bouncer - Welcome back, Professor.  
 Prof - In front, in back, in absentia, it's all welcome at my age.  
 Bouncer - They with you?  
 Prof - They're as with me as what I must live without.  
 Bouncer - Everyone 18?  
 Prof - That's right: three 18ers, which, if my times are good, is 54, or  
 what 50s for.  
 Bouncer - You're over my head, professor.  
 Prof - Wish I was over my own.

*Clara, Alex, Professor, and Mark enter the party. Enter Helen and WJ.*

Helen - My asseverations infallibly apprised our syndic's sibyllines.  
 WJ - Only you could make me miss "I told ya so."  
 Helen - Infiltrate instanter!  
 WJ - Hesitate, Miss Faster: that bouncer looks like he gives up panda  
 for Ramadan.  
 Helen - Bouncer? Ha! I'll flatten him like curls in Quartzsite.

*They step up to the door.*

Bouncer - Names?  
 Helen - We don't have any.  
 Bouncer - You ain't got names?  
 Helen - Identified, disqualified.  
 Bouncer - So how'm I sposta see if you're on the list?  
 Helen - We're on the list.  
 Bouncer - How can you be on the list if you ain't got names?  
 Helen - If we don't have names, how can we not be on the list?  
 Bouncer - Who invited you?  
 Helen - Professor Hazlitt.  
 Bouncer - Well, he just went in, and he ain't put you on the list.  
 Helen - We don't have names, so by not putting us on the list, he put us  
 on the list.  
 WJ - Yeah, like he respects us for who we ain't.  
 Helen - Izactly.  
 Bouncer - Tell you what.  
 Helen - Tell who what?  
 Bouncer - Tell you what: get outta here before I put you on the list of  
 missing persons.  
 Helen - We don't have names, so we're already on that list.

Bouncer - So if you're on the missing persons list, go to the missing persons party.  
WJ - Ok, but we'll have to report you.  
Helen - Izactly.  
Bouncer - Report me to who?  
Helen - To the BPDCFBROUTPWN.  
Bouncer - The what?  
Helen - The Boston Police Department's Committee for Brutal Repression of Unfairness toward People without Names.  
WJ - Eh, ya know, diversity run amuck.  
Bouncer - My brother's a cop, and he never said nuthin bout no BPDP whatever.  
Helen - Then consider yourself lucky, cuz it's tearing families apart.  
WJ - Just imagine: kid goes to college.  
Helen - Gets a bunch of stupid ideas.  
WJ - Then comes home and tells her family she doesn't have a name.  
Helen - Imagine the unfairness.  
WJ - Now imagine the response of the BZDRTSOQALREWNNND.  
Helen - Izactly.  
Bouncer - Fine, you can come in.  
WJ - Smart, for muscle.  
Helen - What's your name?  
Bouncer - Maybe I ain't got one.  
Helen - Damn, you bouncin straight to the top.

*They enter the party. All exit.*

*Scene 8 – Inside the Beauty School. Enter Gordon and Bishy on stage, partiers all around.*

Gord - You ready, babes and buffs, for Beauty School?  
Bish - The world's most prestigious blueniversity.  
Gord - Pop it like ya hock it.

*They pop pills.*

Bish - Cute Brute?  
Gord - Speedball Bunny?  
Bish - Whence the pure confection that is...  
Gord - Wimme now.  
All - Beauty School!  
Gord - For my honey, and I repeat, yo honey, it's that Beauty School is brought to you by X.  
Bish - X? No habla fármaco.  
Gord - X is the cure for the academic ass ache.  
Bish - X is the lyric tweet of rebound baby brain waves.  
Gord - X is the freestyle tongue of naughty obstetricious.  
Bish - X is the deva beat of incognito supralicious.  
Gord - X is the gregarious grid.  
Bish - X is the romp recipe.  
Gord - X is  
Bish - Wimme now.  
All - Ecstasy.  
Bish - Crisco Chimp?  
Gord - Sin Some Dim Sum?  
Bish - Where's Burning Man?  
Gord - Burning Man?

Bish - Yeah, like that really stick-stackt, really ghost pepper, really moto moto man?

Gord - O, you mean the mystic mixer of the rave elixir?

Bish - No, I mean the illbient heartbeat of the double-decker drool bus.

Gord - O, you mean Burning Man.

Bish - Do dat dip dup duh don dik.

Gord - Lemme show you where he at.

Bish - That boy make my eyeballs fat.

Gord - Thrawn outta the bone-dry Hopi lands where Oraibi Wash meets Chinle Valley down a dusty basin of the Chuska Range near the lost city of the Lukachukais comes the man with the stoniest mind.

Bish - O he's a funky chunk o' burnin love.

Gord - He is Geometrico Destructionato.

Bish - Spiff up your genital embrace metaphors...

Gord - Cuz his every thot's that thang.

Bish - And join me in welcoming...

Gord - The headtrancer of the Beauty School...

Bish - The MC of tonight's transgressivities...

Gord - Wimme now.

All - Johnny Brown.

*Enter JB, Lyuba, Zhazha. Dean is to the side.*

JB - Time for a poetry lecher.

Dean - Only notes I'm takin's out your swan song.

JB - Tonight, my fruity pebbled schoolies, we swot the story of sex, cuz what that Statue of Three Lies mixed you ain't one tippie o' truth.

Dean - If the truth met your lips, it would lie about its name.

JB - That's why you need Professor Polymorph and his two rushing angels of nervonic slanguages.

Zhazha - Zeezee Karmaclown.

JB - Bot of lust.

Lyuba - Leelee Zerkersac.

JB - Bot of love.

Dean - And Dirty Dangerpork, bot of larp.

Lyuba/Zhazha - Balilaka alikabala!

JB - We hit that shit so straight, you gon' call yoself a fan.

Dean - And when the shit is in your face, you gon' call yoself my man.

JB - Sex, you see, hasn't always been, but had to bear the pangs of birth.

Lyuba - How pangs?

Zhazha - Why birth?

JB - That chasm's where my cliffhanger's headed.

Dean - Your spasm's where my stiff danger's bedded.

JB - Twas in old India...

Ly/Zha - Duh, kha.

JB - Where the fluviate Punjab swoops and broods, swipping its petal mounds thru the fuliginous Indus damp, that the world was once an immeasurably intimate bloodstream without skin.

Zha - Death to the flesh stockade!

Lyu - Long live the chamois switchblade!

JB - Skin, said the satvas against sutras, is both divine and deadly.

Zha - Why divine?

JB - For only thru fission conduces fusion.

Lyu - Why deadly?  
 JB - For only incision induces contusion.  
 Dean - My derision will loose your confusion.  
 JB - Soon, as sequels will stretch it...  
 Dean - The only flower that lives forever is the tale of the forever flower.  
 JB - Two prophets emerged to declare the dawn of dermis.  
 Zha - I am Inny, and I say your end is in you.  
 Lyu - I am Outty, and I say your end is on you.  
 Dean - I am ugly, and I say my trend is toward you.  
 JB - Then the prophets did as prophets do: they pro foughted.  
 Zha - You cannot shed your skin, so you are its slave.  
 Lyu - Your skin cannot shed you, so it is your slave.  
 Dean - And you cannot shed me, so you are my slave.  
 JB - With that the tongue-tied pinfold burst its fence, skin flyin bout  
 like schmatta, as the crazy and the cozy came O so eerily close,  
 til, explodious implosions, a third prophet came.  
  
 Lyu - Who dat?  
 Zha - What name?  
 JB - His name was Neither-Here-Nor-There.  
 Dean - Your shame's to neither truth nor dare.  
 JB - And Neither-Here-Nor-There declared, "Inny is outty, wuzzy  
 willy, dermis vermis, yeah."  
 Dean - O all is abeyance obeyed.  
 JB - We walk its augur's trace. We warm our waters in its out of  
 reach. We hug its impetuous debatable sign. Single, deft,  
 inaudient, it filters our mind to a stilling silt, floating a freedom  
 mask on the other shore, winging the hank of humanity into the  
 Valley of Hypergoly, where, thanks to skin, we are born to touch  
 it all, and from out touching comes anew.  
 Dean - And from my clutching comes no you.  
 JB - It's then that Inny and Outty played ring around the rosey.  
 Both - Do the dermis!  
 JB - Til Inny said:  
 Zha - We need a word for this.  
 JB - So off they scooncht, down the Indus to the sea, slinking along  
 the spice coast to the pearl bed of words.  
  
 Lyu - Phonesia.  
 JB - And there they met a sly, stony lizard.  
 Zha - Lizard?  
 JB - Wizzap?  
 Lyu - We need a word for dermis dancing.  
 JB - So yous gotsta pay da visit wit mon Simeon Stylites.  
 Zha - Gimme-em Highmightees?  
 Lyu - Protean Uptightees?  
 JB - Nah, mon say Simeon Stylites.  
 Zha - Will he give us a word for dermis dancing?  
 JB - If you gan ged him down dem pillar.  
 Lyu - How do we do that?  
 JB - Try da five fold ecstasies. Shit work some not.  
 Zha - Where can we find this Simeon Stylites?  
 JB - Looks about ya! He be da bootiest boy in da boogaloo bungalow.  
 Dean - They always pick a putz.

*Zhazha grabs Mark.*

Zha - Here he is.

Dean - Putz, poet, pretty boy – terms diverse, one disease.  
 JB - For the fresher wedge of his life, Simeon Stylites, opposed to all things earthly, sat on a pillar and thought himself a bust. Then along came the five fold ecstasies to tempt him down and out.

Lyu - Will he fooze into the ozzy?  
 Zha - Or ever snooze a quasi?  
 JB - This is Verse Wars!  
 Dean - No, this is you aggrandizing yourself by choosing a lesser opponent.

JB - Numero uno: the Ecstasy of Strangers.  
 Lyu - All about me, drifters spin,  
 Caring not a why or when;  
 So I first desire the odd,  
 Extensity that hides to prod.

JB - Sir Simeon, aloof and wean,  
 Jack you this down stalk of bean?  
 Mark - Outsider's no seduction. Birthlings we  
 Crave succor of self midst alien voice,  
 Its muted malice making every choice  
 A private groping at groupies.

Dean - This is a voluble groping at poetry.  
 JB - Good answer, but the end has just begun.  
 Cometh she, the Ecstasy of Exclusion.  
 Zha - You know me, not what I am;  
 You see me, not how I see;  
 You hear me, my voice is jammed;  
 So lost in we, you want me.

JB - No one can resist futile resistance;  
 Descend from judgment, Simeon, and dance!  
 Mark - Strategic passion plays to lose. No trick  
 Can return its takings. Love only thrives  
 Within a primal, personal landscape  
 That lies beneath the lies, grabs us otherwise.

JB - Neverminding's ever climbing, Simeon,  
 But here comes the Ecstasy of Abandon.  
 Zha - Which the twitch, which the twitcher?  
 Where the kist, what the kisser?  
 Abandon, lead me by the hand  
 Back to seas of back on land.

Mark - To force the rule is more unruliness;  
 To need the game the gaming spirit kills;  
 This abandon you cherish is a mess  
 Whose entanglings engagement overfills.

Dean - Even yesterday knows when to quit,  
 But this spitter's his host on the spit.  
 JB - You are, Simeon, sized to surmise;  
 But try this on – the Ecstasy of Surprise.  
 Lyu - Birds in the caulk, slacks on the bees,  
 Shockwaves stressing technicalities.  
 Which never is next? What's the nip sip?  
 Mind is a coin only no-mind can flip.

Mark - We dig for gold in spontaneity,  
 Yet gold is but the dirt of history,  
 So freedom is too under warranty  
 For impulse to unfeign integrity.  
 Dean - His gibber's on fleck, if just for the tweak.

JB - Bird brother, Simeon, sky-siring poet,  
 If there's a gap in knowledge, you know it.  
 But here's one thing no point can unking:  
 The Ecstasy of Nothing.

Zha - I am here, you are there,  
 No one's going anywhere,  
 And in this total lack of something,  
 Nothing ever says I'm coming.

JB - Give it up, Simeon, and let the down be done.  
 Mark - Slow, like steam rising  
 From plane crash dead  
 On Xiao-lin mountain,  
 I uplift into the polarimetric  
 Patience our need becomes  
 When greedy sight's seen thru,  
 Where even the clouds,  
 As they disperse their comfort,  
 Are to extinct domains  
 Far more willful than  
 The sapping myology called  
 Sexual me, and feeling  
 The adaptive fluctuations  
 Of my extraneous being, I sit,  
 Native to wild impulse,  
 Radically fair-minded,  
 Peaceful as a myth untold.

Dean - Simeon wins the Verse Wars!  
 All - Simeon! Simeon!  
 Dean - Crown him Chancellor of the Beauty School!  
 All - Crown him! Crown him!  
 JB - He banters well, but it takes more than words to rule this shaky  
 roost.

Dean - You bartered on his banter and he turned your bash to bashful.  
 No one's ever held the pillar to the end. He tazed your truth,  
 mangled your mingle, and with your fiasco graph he toucht  
 privation deepest. Place the crown on this poet or your cred is off  
 the streets.

JB - Drag the lion to my den and I will interview him further. DJ,  
 drown it out.

*Dean sings.*

Dean - *John Brown has lost his captaincy  
 To a boy who speaks in poetry.  
 John Brown's a lush to failed desire,  
 This boy is love that pays the buyer.  
 John Brown's a deaf spot for a brain,  
 This boy is dreaming all the same.  
 John Brown now runs to crypt his jewel,  
 This boy now runs the Beauty School.*

*JB, Lyuba, Zhazha, Mark exit.*

Clara - Professor, would you fetch me a Leg Spreader, extra  
 maraschinos?  
 Prof - You won't ditch me, will you?

Clara - If I do, you can ditch me back.

*He exits.*

Clara - Come on.

Alex - Where are we going?

Clara - To the top cock's coop.

Alex - But the professor...

Clara - Only butt he get's the one I flick after smokin Johnny B.

*All exit.*

*Scene 9 – John Brown's room. John Brown, Mark, Lyuba, and Zhazha enter.*

JB - Make yourself confusable, Wordboy. ZZ, slice up some pawg cheese, as our new friend here must be beat from stompin them feet. Lyuba, two white Russians, more on the rocks than off the ropes.

*Zhazha and Lyuba exit.*

JB - Wordboy, you won the war, but still may lose the babble.

Mark - My animus was my enemy.

JB - Then my edge is still my plunge.

Mark - I thought it nature's only void, but you are a beautiful man.

JB - No, I'm an ugly situation, but I control the lights.

Mark - Least you're not some edubot armed against obscenities.

JB - Sniffing for lech only slows you down, and my train's on max express, straight track, no stops, super speed, zoom zoom, but your honor's got me feeling kinda choo choo.

Mark - Poetry is unstoppable in your presence.

JB - Please don't use that word in front of my inner problem child; poetry's a tunnel into prison.

Mark - A tuneful cell beats a strident expanse.

JB - Poetry, Wordboy, is dead.

Mark - Then its downfall is its gravity, for new poets are born every day.

JB - So are new spearchuckers, but they go into software.

Mark - Since when does temporary govern time?

JB - Since connectivity killed the where it's at.

Mark - Self will never come unstuck from the speech that gives it soar.

JB - Our super-crashing did emit strange quarks of verbal spark.

Mark - O we could really move some anti-matter.

*Enter Zhazha and cuts some lines.*

JB - Copy that wild-eye, Wordboy. We'll be international poesy pushers, lowballing our piper cub, The Poet's Autopilot, down to the Mandalay of Metaphorical Mentation, then, with our dictions stuff to the hymn with huge American rhyme syndicates, we'll haul back enough chiasmic leptons, periphrastic muons, and uncut assonant protons to burn the septa off those Hohum nose-it-all.

Mark - They'll matriculate at Beauty School.

JB - Our shield will read Versitas.

Mark - There's only one class – the Nonesuchables.

JB - Attendance strictly prohibited.  
Mark - We need a fight song.

*John mimics "Fair Harvard."*

JB - *Free poets, we join in thy querulant song,  
And with stressings murmur thee more,  
By these Beauty School raves, from the page that is gone  
To the page that is waiting before.*

*Enter Lyuba with two white russians.*

Mark - To victory, poetry, and standard, beauty. Beauty more opulent than luxury, beauty that closes the country club, beauty whose wild, innocent youth burns the monuments down, beauty that never runs thru the nickel.

JB - Literary fever's given you a healthy head, Wordboy, but your sequela oblongata seems enflamed – if I may offer you my atrocious opinion, shut your mouth and save your mind from its own backdrafting diploma.

Mark - You deny that poetry is beauty's Get Out Of Yale Free card?

JB - I declare that the rectors of poetry put beauty in detention and it ain't a pretty place.

Mark - None praise poetry like the rich.

JB - I'm broke by the beauty my riches have bought me.

Mark - Bought?

JB - Like bottles, so borrowed, as all's returned, and dirt's the deposit.

Mark - It is a pleasure for beauty to live, so may I guiltlessly pleasure in the poetry of its incessant nascency.

JB - ZZ, educamate the myth-grader.

Zhazha - It is pleasure for beauty to live, Woodboy? You know why I leave home to be with Johnny? In my country, it is torture for beauty to live. When I ten and sister twelve, we go to city seeking job because mother's poison so expensive and father, how you say, always chuck us into bed. In city, big man pretending to be wealthy light bulb maker looking for packaged people lock us in truck and drive us to girl farm. Men at morning come to take much pleasure from our beauty. In afternoon men with cameras come and take much pleasure from our beauty. Then at night men in funny clothes with hurting toys take all pleasure from our beauty. Finally, when my sister try to run away, they throw her in campfire til pigs take pleasure from her beauty. This is what is to be beauty in my country, where poetry is, how you say, very populated.

Lyuba - No listen crazy pussy, Woodboy. My country not bad; it just no good.

JB - But damn, I hate a downer mood more than icy slopes. What you do in school today, Wordboy?

Mark - I saw a burnt woman.

JB - You what?

Mark - On campus, during class, I saw a burnt woman.

JB - You saw a burnt woman.

Mark - She stared at me thru the window.

JB - Did she send you here?

Lyuba - What is burped woman?

JB - If you're in bed with her, I'll nuke you both.

Mark - In bed with her?  
 JB - Is she in this house?  
 Mark - I dunno.  
 JB - Megan, you listen hard to Brahman Brown.  
 The'll be no getting what you want from he  
 You told the'll be no getting what him wants.  
 This life is but a film my genes project  
 Upon a mental screen, each frame a death,  
 And yes, it is the story of your sex,  
 So am I merely moving images  
 Flickering out the dead's perverted dreams,  
 But as I call myself all you don't want,  
 I'm more than venging protein's sordid plot.  
 Don't think your stuck ideal shylocks my sense  
 To the fluxuant real, for slash and burn  
 Morality will never neutralize  
 The seed that sprouts the tree of good and bad,  
 As it grows ever virile with the ash.  
 Hear that, Megan? I'm receiving a call  
 From the kernel of disparate desire,  
 And it's saying, "Sex is war, so lose it."  
 I am that boy of urgent peaches, girl.  
 I am that boy of pounding summer rut,  
 My mama's jiggy pudding churning deep  
 And awful in my tummy, yes I am  
 That jugular stud of deceptive love  
 Whose spunk injection all lips twitter of,  
 And you will never shut me down, you hear?  
 I will slush my fund, port my folio,  
 Maximize all spiracle investments,  
 For the myxospongia grows horny  
 Feelers to unfeel with discovery,  
 So out. I will not have you in my house.  
 I will not, or I will, but then you'll see:  
 The blast that comes of us ends you and me.  
 Mark - She didn't send me.  
 Both - Where you going, Johnny?

*All exit.*

*Scene 10 - The party. Enter Clara, Alex, and the Fuzzy Purple Man. Dean enters to the side.*

Dean - O, look, it's my classmates, but who needs class to mate?  
 Clara - Man, you're so fuzzy and purple.  
 Dean - The Deano sure could three hole punch her loose leaf.  
 FP - I'm the fuzzy purple man.  
 Dean - Nothing gets a she-sow hoot like a prickly puffi-up he boar.  
 Clara - Well, fuzzy purple man, you know where John Brown's at?  
 Dean - Lewd is alacrity, and a slimy snout better spades porous pouches  
 of gilty slop.  
 FP - Is he fuzzy and purple?  
 Dean - So there's my modus upperhandy.  
 Clara - This is his party, so he's more like rich and irresistible.  
 Dean - Brissly hide, stunted leg, cranium caved but quick as dope, with  
 crooked hooves to quickly skin the skink.

FP - If he isn't fuzzy and purple, he's where the fuzzy purple man is not.  
 Dean - Deformed, I am form's facteur, as practice makes pervert.  
 Clara - And where, fuzzy purple man, is that?  
 Dean - Prime your grinder, cuz I'm one sexy fuckin meat group.  
 FP - Don't ask me, I'm the fuzzy purple man.  
 Dean - Enter Haughty the Hog.  
 Alex - Your chemical crypsis needs more be-of-use-ium.

*The Fuzzy Purple Man exits. Dean steps up to them.*

Dean - How you shawties honeydewin?  
 Clara - Not you, so space or brace.  
 Dean - Damn, you give good chat. That bombass pornotide got my mouse on mustang. You'd be baller tits on voyeur cam.  
 Clara - My kitty'd crash your server.  
 Dean - Bestiality's a bull market, baby.  
 Alex - Get lost or I get the bouncer.  
 Dean - Who's the eyesore?  
 Alex - Look who's talking.  
 Dean - I'm talking, you irredeemable rodent feces mashup moppet, in a noble scam to dig my unclippt greyhound nails into this bunny pot pie, and were it not for your poorly managed, subparly proportioned, utterly disgusting holocaust museum of a body fumigating this main course filly mignon like a stinky side dish of corruption index, I'd be forkin some holy snail down my jiggy pilot paunch ri' now, so exit, Ana Phrodisia. This is Beauty School, not Ugly Camp.  
 Alex - Ugly sees but ugly.  
 Dean - And butt ugly's what I'm seein.  
 Alex - Then I'll rip your eyes out to spare you my sight.  
 Dean - If I can't see, I can't see you to John Brown.  
 Clara - Alex, wait.  
 Alex - I just wanna find Mark.  
 Clara - You can take us to John Brown?  
 Dean - What gustation for my services?  
 Clara - The nutation of my cervixes.  
 Dean - And Humpty Dumpty had a great boing!  
 Clara - But first, you must apologize to my bestie.  
 Alex - I don't want his apology. I want Mark.  
 Dean - What are you, a dysphasic dog? Mark! Mark!  
 Clara - Apologize.  
 Dean - I'm sorry you're so ugly.  
 Clara - Humpty Dumpty's bout to meet Cracky Kathy.  
 Dean - I'm sorry I called you ugly; hit by the what-the-fuck truck is more like it.  
 Clara - Last chance at the My Shoot Saloon.  
 Dean - Forgive me.  
 Alex - Fuck off.  
 Clara - You are forgiven.  
 Dean - And she's for givin to the pound.  
 Clara - Where is John Brown?  
 Dean - Come in close, I'll tell ya.  
 Alex - Clara.  
 Clara - I can handle myself.

*She leans in.*

Dean - But I can handle you better.

*Dean grabs her. She hits him.*

Dean - At last, we're makin love war!

Alex - Are you ok?

Dean - I feel so sweet inside, I'm poopin cruellers.

Clara - Touch me again, my stilettos crack your stones.

Dean - If you're lookin to hotbox Johnny Brown, say "I wanna burn."

*Clara and Alex exit.*

Dean - Yowza, that was better than dumpin drano down a cockblocker.  
I'd say I'm native to this obscene state. Yay, in bawd I trust.

*Enter Professor Hazlitt, holding two drinks.*

Dean - Careful, Professor Two Fists. You might do something out of the temporary.

Professor - I lost my date.

Dean - You lost your date when you dated yourself by dating the dead.

Professor - I am the pre-eminent expert on the subject of involuntional melancholia in the early works of the late romantics.

Dean - What you ever do save blinker the young with outrage so you can win at sneaky nut?

*Dean sings.*

*Professor Looky  
Can't get no nooky  
Can't get no nooky  
Misread her booky  
Can't get no nooky  
Professor Hooky  
Can't get no nooky*

Professor - What are you, my guardian taunt?

Dean - Dean of Danger, Chump Changer, copulati me salutant.

*Dean exits.*

Professor - If that's what girls are into these days, I'm the Touchy Mortician.

*All exit.*

*Scene 11 – The party. Enter John Brown.*

JB - Come out, Megan, or I will smoke you out.

*Enter Mark.*

Mark - I swear it, John. She looked and never spoke.  
I came here with some friends and didn't know  
You knew her, or whatever you two have.

JB - We have have-not, so must we never mix,  
Lest the tilt-a-whirl of life come so close  
To the camera we lose our heads for looks.

*Lyuba and Zhazha enter.*

Lyuba - Why you dip mode, Johnny baby?  
Zhazha - What is problem time?

*Enter Alex and Clara.*

Alex - Mark, I've been looking for you everywhere.  
Mark - Tell John Brown I came with you and Clara.  
Alex - Why?  
Mark - Tell him.  
Clara - He came with me and Alex,  
And he's with her, and I'm with no one yet.  
JB - Lyuba, Zhazha, back to the Sky Cave.  
Lyuba/Zhazha - Johnny!  
JB - Back, or no more Zamboni dung.

*They exit.*

Alex - Can we please speak in private, Mark?  
Mark - Not now.  
Alex - Yes, now.  
JB - You heard her, Wordboy. Change your range.

*Mark and Alex exit.*

Clara - If you're the producer of this hot mess,  
I'd love to audition.  
JB - I've seen enough  
To know you get the part.  
Clara - O boy, which part?  
JB - The biggest.  
Clara - O my gosh, but are you sure  
I can do it?  
JB - From what I've seen so far  
You can do anything you put your mind to.  
Clara - I'm so excited.  
JB - That makes two of us.  
Clara - What's the part called?  
JB - Clara.  
Clara - That's my name.  
JB - Yep.  
Clara - What's the show called?  
JB - Clara.  
Clara - The title role?  
You sure know how to fire a girl up.  
JB - Yeah, I've lit a few, but you are special.  
Clara - I am?  
JB - Very.  
Clara - Hey, but how can you tell?  
I mean, you haven't even seen me yet.  
JB - I'm seeing you right now.

Clara - Gee, you are good.  
 JB - And one thing I know is with talent like yours  
 All I have to do is trust my instincts.  
 Clara - Oo, can I trust your instincts too?  
 JB - You do.  
 Clara - It's true, I do.  
 JB - Like I trust yours,  
 And together, we'll make you a fucking star.  
 Clara - Wow, I'm almost tempted to call my mom.  
 JB - We can call her tomorrow.  
 Clara - Yes, you're right.  
 I need to stay focused on this project,  
 Cuz honestly it sounds pretty intense.  
 JB - Intensely rewarding.  
 Clara - O, I have no doubt.  
 JB - When can you start?  
 Clara - Hold on, Mr. Bankroll.  
 In school they taught us never to accept  
 A part right away.  
 JB - Even the biggest part?  
 Clara - Not even that part, otherwise you seem  
 Like you want the part.  
 JB - Do you want the part?  
 Clara - O yes.  
 JB - Then why not seem like you want it?  
 Clara - Cuz you'll think I'm desperate.  
 JB - Are you desperate?  
 Clara - Maybe, but you must never think I am  
 Lest you try to take advantage of me.  
 JB - I'd never do that.  
 Clara - How long do I have?  
 JB - How long?  
 Clara - To tell you if I want the part.  
 JB - How long do you want?  
 Clara - Three seconds.  
 JB - 1, 2, 3...  
 Clara - I wanna burn.

*He pushes her down.*

JB - Megan!  
 Clara - Motherfucker.  
 JB - Hear that, Megan?  
 Go tell your father, girl, that he's been fired  
 By Johnny Candlekick. And far's the corpse  
 That's now your genie, tell her I ain't got,  
 Cuz malefaction's ashy fingers might  
 Paw for feed at the casements of my mud,  
 But every day at dawn, fresh beauty jaunts  
 Like a coy French maid, "Oui, I do windows,"  
 And with that kitty swish, she wipes them clean,  
 Then out my grimy hovel head I gaze  
 At nature's ripe exotic splendor bof,  
 So go I digging for what's rightly mine,  
 For pain is claim, much to our own delay,  
 Yet value in possession is the swap.

Swap! Swap! For obfuscation, opulence.  
And for this show beer, Megan? Sustenance.

*John exits. Enter Dean.*

Dean - Aren't you the woman on the bag of dicks someone keeps  
sending to my apartment?  
Clara - I said I wanna burn and John Brown hit me.  
Dean - Hit you like hit you or hit you like hit you?

*She hits him.*

Clara - Hit me like that, bitch.  
Dean - Like that? You squirt your gogurt too?  
Clara - You're ballsy for a eunuch.  
Dean - And you're overstafft for a cheap hotel.  
Clara - The asshole position in my pants is filled.  
Dean - You fetcht-out pug, I'm already in your pants.  
You pet my buzz cut every time you wipe;  
You breach my ground troops every time you tamp;  
You crowd my hallway every time you tight;  
You drown my mermen every time you damp.  
That glory hole's my piscina animalia,  
And I'm all bellyfloppin palilalia.  
Clara - Why are you so crude?  
Dean - When the kid is straight, the man is crooked.  
Clara - Your kid is too cruel.  
Dean - Yo, I got altruistic incentives, bitch.  
Clara - Like what?

*Dean sings.*

*Dreaming, I develop, love,  
An organ not my own,  
Pink and puff, like a glove,  
That snaps the springy bone;  
Wag it not, throb it never,  
But is still and rapt,  
Different as my need's endeavour,  
Want in fibers trappt;  
You are it, so be disposed  
To sit for my inception,  
Heaving as the fire froze  
In nature's first election.*

Clara - An albino grape has a better chance at getting paired with steak.

*She exits.*

Dean - Call me a premature evacuator, but I'm gettin off!

*All exit.*

*Scene 12 - The party. Enter Alex and Mark.*

Alex - I was so impressed with your performance

Mark - In the Verse Wars.  
 Mark - Thanks.  
 Alex - How did you do that?  
 Mark - Do what?  
 Alex - Speak in poetry.  
 Mark - I dunno.  
 Alex - Can I ask you something, Mark?  
 Mark - Go ahead.  
 Alex - Are you and I together?  
 Mark - Together?  
 Alex - Yeah, like you told me I was beautiful,  
 You came to this party with me, and now  
 We're here together, but are we together,  
 Not in the same space sense of together,  
 But in the same prepense of together.  
 Mark - Prepense?  
 Alex - Are we intentionally together?  
 Mark - Sure, Alex, like we're all here together.  
 Alex - But it means something that you came with me.  
 Mark - What's it mean?  
 Alex - That you want to be with me.  
 Mark - Ok.  
 Alex - Ok?  
 Mark - Ok.  
 Alex - As in ok  
 I agree or ok I don't agree?  
 Mark - Agree to what?  
 Alex - You want to be with me.  
 Mark - Look, Alex.  
 Alex - Look at what? I want to look  
 At you, but I don't want to look at you  
 Unless you want to look at me, so where  
 Should I look?  
 Mark - That is not for me to say.  
 Alex - I am for you to say. Say what you want,  
 And I'm that, cuz that's where I'm at with you.  
 I'm yours. I'm what you say. What do you say?  
 You cannot say. So I am nothing then,  
 Though nothing knows alone to say for you  
 What you should say: remember when you said  
 I want to hide inside my head?  
 Mark - Sorta.

*Enter Dean and starts listening from the side.*

Alex - Yeah, sorta, you sorta said it,  
 And when you sorta said it you were right,  
 Not sorta right – cryptopensively right.  
 I hide in my head, cuz when I come out,  
 Taking sunny for a groundhog's welcome,  
 What am I?

*Dean steps in.*

Dean - Fair game for happy hunter.  
 Alex - He comes, and with baited words, lures me

Towards him, bait like...  
 Dean - You're so beautiful.  
 Alex - And...  
 Dean - Howbout Saturday night?  
 Alex - So dumb with love,  
 I move closer, all my inborn caution  
 Melting off, and with, "I'd really like that"...  
 Dean - The kill is made.  
 Alex - But is the ravin clued?  
 Dean - Hell, no.  
 Alex - Cuz I'm all, "O my awesome life.  
 He thinks I'm beautiful. He's chosen me."  
 For in my rummy orgasmic delusion  
 A warm adrenaline wind...  
 Dean - Like the dead  
 Must feel once they end their failed marriage  
 With life...  
 Alex - Swirls thru me so much janky frip  
 My relief garbage sales my demurral.  
 Dean - She basks in a false positive flashback  
 Of all the good things that never happened.  
 Alex - I pull persimmons off the lowborn tree.  
 Dean - She turns a glorious refuge of her own  
 Appallingly snaggle-tombed emotions.  
 Alex - Until, predictable as up for grabs,  
 I hear my handsome hero to the side...  
 Dean - "I did her, bro, so gimme that dime bag."  
 Alex - A bet. I was a bet.  
 Dean - A winning bet.  
 Alex - Not yet, cuz bro's all like...  
 Dean - "You ain't won  
 Til I see proof you n-bombed her kimba."  
 Alex - And he replies, gorgeous as a butcher  
 Stropping sexy blade over wittle wamb...  
 Dean - "I'd rather screw a wet wig on a socket.  
 That gink got shadow-banned for posting face.  
 She's like the chips and salsa of schlumpy.  
 My kafka poker's set to approve her  
 As the only cure for quif addiction.  
 Colostomy, colectomy, quit liking me."  
 Alex - And so, after this uplifting downgrade,  
 I zombie home and stare into the mirror  
 With all the namaste of a spent teabag:  
 Fuck you, reflection. Fuck you, family.  
 Fuck you, world, O, and fuck you, Alex,  
 For being so fucking unfuckable.  
 Dean - I'd say fuck you back were I not worried  
 You might take it as a proposition.  
 Alex - So, Mark...  
 Dean - It's pronounced Mock...  
 Alex - Go tell your bro  
 I believed you; tell him that you did me  
 And collect your reward.  
 Dean - We have a winner!  
 Alex - But for my devastation I demand  
 One repairing: tell those happy hunters

I will never drop, for there's no shooter  
 Sharp enough that he can hit the hollow.

Dean - And that's it for another annoying episode of Top Dog and Ugly Duck. Can these quisling creatures procreate and end the reign of iMelmpt, the Terribly Important? Tune in next week for the no good conclusion of "Drunk Enough to Screw a Nail" or "This Living Fossil Has Working Boobs."

Mark - Clear out, asshole.

Dean - By the looks of you, I already cleared my asshole out.

Alex - Ignore him.

Dean - At your bestie's peril, Princess Shrivel-Me-Scotch-Eggs, for I bear an official request from Clara.

Alex - What about her?

Dean - About her is blood, what is blood, and blood is blood, so someone's having her nose period and needs you to export some indian paintbrush from your bag of eternal stench.

Alex - Where is she?

Dean - Between the endless keg line and the gadoja dojo, so she's wack for the where.

Mark - I'll come with.

Dean - She doesn't want you, which is news to no one save you.

Alex - You're in deep shit if you're lying to me.

Dean - Why lie? I'm in deep shit just being over you.

*Alex exits.*

Mark - What's your problem?

Dean - I'm honest. What's yours?

Mark - I'm not.

Dean - Congratulations! Carpet layers tack more shag.

Mark - Then truth is life's most willing victim.

Dean - And change is a lame excuse for change, but why so fizzle madizzle? I know John Brown like guitarded wanksbedextrous, and no one ever sunned his mayo so. Circle jerk?

Mark - I'm good.

Dean - You badder than good; you DJ DNA, running our lab rat grooves thru some vagarious amazables.

Mark - So what's with Brown and the burnt woman?

Dean - What's with you and the burnt woman?

Mark - I saw her once.

Dean - Damn, you lucky fucky. The burnt woman only steps out of the oven for the din-din of aspiring poets she deems heavy-beauty enough for the rumination of her ghastly, coxing rations.

Mark - If that's luck, I'm thirsty for a dry spell.

Dean - Meh, no end in aching for allay.

Mark - How's she know I'm an aspiring poet?

Dean - She knows when a man wants to meter, but don't expect her charbroil on your baguette, cuz she John Brown's dejeuner.

Mark - He lost it when I brought her up.

Dean - That's cuz he almost lost it when she got it up.

Mark - They had something?

Dean - They would have had everything if not for the conductible autoerotic immolation.

Mark - What?

Dean - But who's your muse? Ugly Duck?

Mark - No, and she's not that ugly.

Dean - So which ugly is she? That ugly everyone calls beautiful cuz they feel bad it's so ugly? That ugly everyone says we all have to be to end the oppression of beauty? Or that ugly everyone shoves on us so we keep buying beauty cream? If she ain't ugly then I'm a girl scout cookie.

Mark - She's a woman, and therefore beautiful.

Dean - Ha, there are no more beautiful women  
 Since vagitarian gaybos like you  
 Started spouting stupid thong stud shit like that.  
 Fled into plastids for shield and shrouding,  
 Convolved by managed dreams into clouding,  
 Sad-glad, fist-in-mouth, you jape our arousing  
 In some cockamamie bildungsroman  
 That proves you're just a slushy spoof of a man.  
 There are no more beautiful women,  
 Only politically active schlub tubs  
 That beat us with the truth so we never verve  
 The nerve cell out their disowned comeliness.  
 There are no more beautiful women,  
 Save she who, burnt, would kill to win the pageant.

Mark - She beautiful?

Dean - The current term is "hot."  
 Above her, little birdies singe and crash.  
 Around her, mighty rhinos roast and pop.  
 The leafies on their trees in fire flash,  
 As neath her, all the soil is sere to crop.  
 That babe's so hot the pulsing sky's got holes  
 To let escape we sweaty, hairless souls.

Mark - I'd put her out.

Dean - O she is pure put out,  
 Yet you would fight her blaze that frights the night  
 As rangers fight, contain with righteous swilge  
 Her embers bright, spit frigorific slush,  
 Dump slurry foams upon her high insight,  
 Your hose rambunctious slathing forth its mush.  
 Why shovel, cut, encrenelate, and bilge?  
 Why bunyan all her fuelful forest gives?  
 Why seal her air-rapport with clotting sieves?  
 O let her natural powers cyclic burn  
 And thru that clear clog true poetics learn.

Mark - But what has she to do with poetry?

Dean - Is she not heat that warms the coldest tongue,  
 The tortured shape addicts us to the young,  
 A sight so ghoulish we past spectra strive,  
 That ugly beauty round her truly thrive?  
 In pace beyond control, she is the parse.  
 On spirit's wound, her gasping's liquid gauze.  
 As pure as fumes from deep earth's boiling stone,  
 She's with us that we come to be alone.  
 Her ache the coup that lust may never tame,  
 She is an avatar of our first flame,  
 And he that would make meaning of dehisce  
 Must glean his grammar from her scrambling kiss.

Mark - You grant insanity too much intention.

Dean - You grant inanity too much invention.  
 Her frenzy is the fix to versoplexy;

Sans her morass your poems are pesty,  
 With it you exude squeezable bubbles  
 Of freshet; your ersatz, vagrant troubles  
 Banter spacey, pushing you, like fecca,  
 Deep into posteriad dejecta,  
 But she's the love-spot's spotlight, a figurine  
 From those reality shows in your machine;  
 O she's a high that's higher abating,  
 Teaching us the measure of our waiting:  
 That from a source we rise, a rotting storm;  
 That social wires force illiberal form;  
 That wrongly done said rightly's perfect truth;  
 That beauty is the velvet on the noose.

Mark - Are we in a class together?  
 Dean - I'm in a class by my stealth.  
 Mark - You go to Harvard?  
 Dean - Harvard? Yo, I got shit to learn.  
 Mark - So what's your name?  
 Dean - Routine Slaughters.  
 Mark - Cool.  
 Dean - Poutine Squatters.  
 Mark - Ok.  
 Dean - Butene Daughters.  
 Mark - Later, man.  
 Dean - Nice to beat you, Later Man, now allow me to pre-empt your  
 regularly scheduled delay with some ahead of its time hold up  
 before you're Laterman the Late. You saw the burnt woman  
 because she loves you.

Mark - I gave her no reason.  
 Dean - No reason is reason enough for love.  
 Mark - Love without reason but grades the road for hate.

*Mark exits. Enter Lyuba and Zhazha.*

Lyuba - You go back to Russia!  
 Zhazha - No, you!  
 Lyuba - No, you!  
 Zhazha - No, you!  
 Dean - Look, it's the Russians, fighting each other, or am I being  
 redundant?  
 Lyuba - What you say for Russia?  
 Dean - What's to say for Russia save there isn't much to say?  
 Zhazha - You no like Russia?  
 Dean - Russia's lovely, less the Russians, so let Russians be Russians that  
 there be more Russians.  
 Lyuba - I am certain you have never been.  
 Dean - I'd rather never be than be Russian.  
 Zhazha - You shut mouth or I stuff you Russia.

*Enter John Brown.*

Lyuba - Johnny, Lyuba say I go back to Russia, but I have your baby, so  
 you no make me, right, Johnny?  
 JB - Not have my baby, Lyuba, am my baby.  
 Lyuba - No, have your baby.  
 Zhazha - You no have his baby!

JB - We will talk about this later.  
Zhazha - You blow smack up Johnny's ashram.  
Lyuba - Tests say I am baby!

*They exit. Dean sings.*

*All the beggings ever wheezed,  
All the dreamers ever teased,  
And every taunted tiny son  
That grows to shrink and shrinks undone  
Will never change the freaky fact  
That truth's a pyromaniac  
Set on playing hot or not  
So it can flip us when we flop.*

JB - Who are you?  
Dean - I'm you, with extra ass-to-mouth scenes.  
JB - I've never seen you before.  
Dean - Cuz you can't see yourself.  
JB - Thru which medium's a man  
To view his unmediated truance?  
Dean - Thru the hummingbird labia in the sky  
That show us we can always find what's missing  
From our macrotial, crippled existence  
If we give ourselves back to the burnt woman.  
JB - Have you seen her? Is she here? Where is she?  
Dean - Shift it down, Mr. Body-Slammin Shit Bag.  
You way too whirled in the world. Course I seen  
The burnt woman. I got demise, don't I?  
But as for at, her purlieu's obvs in you,  
So check yourself, Bastion of Not Nervous.  
JB - I'll kick her out.  
Dean - Which finsta has the foot?  
The poet, the professor, or the playboy?  
JB - The playboy.  
Dean - Playing the boy to avoid  
Being a man's avoiding that one thing  
About men only we unmanly men know:  
Everything inside a man's a woman,  
So we sulk about, sunk in the sick sense  
Of deviant self, our auxiliary  
Our ineptitude, knowing that woman  
Is the reptile of source and solution,  
And to reclaim ourselves, we vape her out  
By burning down her squatted residence,  
Our wagered body, as we rise to raze  
A haunted playboy mansion in repairs.  
JB - Then I'll profess the justice of her vanish  
From vitals she's been disinvented from,  
And sure's the old are mockt to sure their spawn,  
She's out before my lecture's premier yawn.  
Dean - What can you profess but your perversions,  
And how can she respond save to remain,  
For she's in you to press at that justice  
Makes your cognition the ruddy returns  
Of her squadrons celeste. Look how she flares,

Dying to lift your dapple off the surface,  
 Yet there you are, lounging on her launchpad,  
 Deriding her hypothesis engines,  
 Ripping her firmament with shanks of sleaze,  
 Dumping prompt detritus into her seas,  
 All so your sparkling, greasy rape snorkel  
 Can shoot its sloganeering barbituates  
 Of tangy, social brie perpetual  
 Into her community of genius.  
 For your hairy sinew of hucksterism,  
 Your disgruntled jiggling waste cakelet,  
 And your tainting, decontemporizing  
 Curiosity, I hereby name you  
 Professor of the Girl You'll Never Get.  
 JB - Then knowing she wants me to go poet,  
 I'll drive her out in my Dodge Discursion.  
 Dean - O yeah, you'll sing her like Louisianan  
 Leaflets on Tel Avivan weaponry  
 In a universe hardly universal:

*When I pump long, my nozzle shrivels,  
 To maingy meals from bundant vittles,  
 Then to my love am I unattractive:  
 Action renders us inactive.  
 Stingy as the be here now,  
 Weazened from its hukilau,  
 "Bigger portions," cries my she;  
 Pleasure stocks vacuity.  
 Cheer too much, my larynx blister.  
 Think too much, my axons twister.  
 Love too much, despite develops,  
 Show it, and it love envelops,  
 But as our dreams décor decay,  
 Pump my nipples another day.*

You're right. Spill such hogwash on her muumuu,  
 She's gone, but thing is, what's then left of you?

JB - Only a stranger could know me so well.  
 Dean - Anyone with half a unit knows you,  
 For you are the portent crumbling, the revival  
 Stumbling, you are the museum mumbling,  
 Preference grumbling, idioplasm fumbling,  
 You are the formatted hoax, whose true self  
 Talks in cheat-speak to improve its status,  
 Which strengthens alone your nymic nervulose  
 To awe at the extranies of difference  
 That all you do is dope your soul with tidbits,  
 So as you swerve from thing to pringled thing,  
 Sacrificing wisdom to dud meters,  
 Your adroit power twitches with the times  
 That what you ought you did not, cannot do.  
 JB - My anxiety is haggard by its rest.  
 Dean - You've randonauted down bottom-out drag  
 In search of syndication long enough.  
 Trying not to think about her's only

Preventing you from knowing how to think.  
Saved by her, you'll spend yourself more wisely.  
She means well, and meaning genders the man.  
JB - She means hell, so I'm damned the more I damn.

*John Brown exits.*

Dean - *Goodnight geistlich, goodnight fling,  
John Brown's got in my heart-center sting.  
Voyeurism, voyeurism, sex as flaw,  
John Brown's shot by empleomania.  
But yay I found his price with my appraisin,  
Cuz 'fwe all died the same, who'd sing amazin?  
Dean of the Crack in the Ladies' Man,  
I'll make ya think shame's just an endless sham.*

All exit.

*Scene 13 - The party. Enter Alex and Clara.*

Alex - Clara, are you ok? That creep said you were hurt.  
Clara - That creep said, "say I wanna burn" to John Brown, and when I  
did, he fucking attacked me.  
Alex - Let's just leave.

*Enter Mark.*

Mark - I'll go with, if I'm welcome.  
Alex - You're not.

*Enter Professor Hazlitt.*

Prof - The Keats Society convenes again.  
Alex - Class is over. I'm taking Clara home.  
Mark - What happened?  
Clara - Nothing.  
Alex - John Brown assaulted her.  
Prof - On the topic of who's taking Clara home  
And who has, right or not, assaulted whom,  
Class has just begun, and no one's leaving  
Til I say. My rank got you in this rave,  
So I will let you out once you've been ranked,  
Else your rankings reflect my rejection.  
Alex - The Faculty Oversight Committee  
Will no doubt be interested in such a threat.  
Prof - The Student Integrity Commission  
Will no doubt be interested in the fact  
You shaggies all got zoinkt on scooby snacks  
At a renowned off-campus drug bucket,  
And my life's as gone thru as yours just out,  
So who bleeds the most if we get busted?  
Now, Clara, please recite the third stanza.

*He hands her a book.*

Clara - "Ah, happy, happy boughs! That cannot shed

Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
For ever piping songs for ever new;”

*Mark takes the book from her.*

Mark - “More happy love! More happy, happy love!  
For ever warm and still to be enjoy’d,  
For ever panting, and for ever young;”

*Alex takes the book from him.*

Alex - “All breathing human passion far above,  
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy’d,  
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.”

Prof - So now the test, with I the open book.  
Mark, plead my case to Clara. She came here  
With me, so should she with me homeward.  
And students, note: you will both be graded  
On your performances, here and elsewhere.

Alex - I will not submit to this.

Clara - Alex, don’t.

My honor isn’t worth more than Harvard.

Prof - Especially at this evening’s prices.

Clara - Go on, Wordboy. Show the flobber how you frosh.

Mark - It seems, per this late recited passage,  
That Keats implores us strive at our ideal  
Where love is ever young, as here below  
It’s sorrowful and cloyed, high parcht and burnt,  
So if in some body’s brow-beating look  
We think to see love’s spirit re-emerge  
And spin thru wild signs our reticence,  
We can but blame beauty’s vespering blend  
That hides from us the very thing we’d view  
Should we breach decency to quash athirst.

Clara - Ideals are not attained by coercion  
But are coerced by what we would attain,  
So’s your defending innocence not proof  
Of some consorting inhuman corruption?

Mark - No tagging, telic rendition rules me:

I see what I want, I want what I see,

And like the undercut in overcome,

My message comes of all medium free.

Clara - No, your message comes overdetermined

By the medium of underhanded.

Mark - All my would-have has is underhanded:

I am to myself capricious burden,

A played-out fold, an irresponsible

Electorate of impossible choices,

Yet you are perfection, unmoving swoon,

A streusel my false tonguing would unkink,

So take my underhand, and feel my cause

As nothing more than truing how you touch.

Clara - The seething ocean drained of life is truth,

The lambency that lags our deadened eyes.

Keep your truth and give me misadventure.

Mark - My conch is crawling toward the crumple zone.  
 Clara - Yet do you crave to stimulate or silence?  
 Mark - Elusive quiz from skill of beauty's brain!  
 I crave, my private judge, as lashes winded,  
 Wasps released, monotonies disbanding,  
 And every wreck I splay displays my all,  
 The swath my soul has veered to find its bearings,  
 In morphic mingling; out my mad words pour  
 To stimulate your urge to silence them,  
 All husht that then I hear your every quest.  
 Clara - Your mouth moves much too much.  
 Mark - So then stop it.

*They kiss.*

Prof - Let this be a night to not remember.  
 Alex - Which Power Pussy Shit Show's this, Clara?  
 Clara - The only one that matters in the moment  
 That's all we'll ever have of that someday  
 We can't but crave: When your tits got turgor,  
 Your mink is soft, and your butt's on bubble,  
 Pop the cork with no worry who it hits.  
 Or ought my pleasure take its tips from you?  
 You who dress your mind in drab hand-me-downs,  
 Who kill your freedom like some sacrifice,  
 Yet sacrifice to what? Illcliteracy?  
 You clash with yourself, Alex. Your station  
 Squelches a thousand contrary signals,  
 And not a one of them rings come n get it.  
 The erotic squish of the world's cool breeze  
 Can't reach you in your thick kiln of sorrow  
 Where you glaze your little pots for growing sad.  
 Me, I wake where I will, cuz if you can't  
 Get off on yourself, how are others to?  
 Woman should be hot by her own circuits,  
 Irradiating self-rejuvenance,  
 The mirror of her body where she sees  
 An ego delible to all delight  
 By way of set-off sheets between her selves,  
 That when she would, she simply strips the signs  
 And writes herself anew. So watch in awe:  
 Imagine is the verb I squeeze from law.  
 Alex - You sell what you should self, and live the loss.  
 Clara - If you don't like my way, don't look my way.

*Clara and Mark exit.*

Alex - Order up, Professor Burger Flipper.

*Alex exits. Enter Helen and WJ.*

Helen - Professor Hazlitt, I'm Helen Vendler, this is WJ Bate, and you  
 may have imprinted our applicant facies in the syntagmatic chain  
 "this morning/Harvard Hopefuls Tour/random encounter," and  
 we're first person present at the illustrious Beauty School to take  
 pansophical advantage of your cryptomimic admissions

practicum, which, I credulize, we have overthwarted super modum mensurae.

WJ - Please, Professor, Helen is what one might call perilously motivated, so if our taking your excellent throwaways as any indication that this way lies Harvard...

Prof - Welcome, wise Helen. You have heard the true owl through the swart waft. Allow me to escort you to the seminarian citadel for your quadrivial coronation.

Helen - Moi?

Prof - Toi.

*They start to exit.*

WJ - Et me, bidet?

*Enter Gordon and Bisly.*

Gordon - Bishumbilix, I need you to freak sink  
And tell your Lordy Gordy what you saw.

Bisly - Autokinetic roadkill.

Gordon - Pour some concrete on me, girl.

Bisly - Peripatetic pretzel.

Gordon - Harvard to Bisly; complete sentences, Bisly.

Bisly - Ambulatory medical waste.

Gordon - Don't tell me you took the fuzzy purple pill!

Bisly - I was in the yard, gronking to Stankonia, when her incredulizing tire fire blew my way, and my mindful went bezow doo doo zoppity bop bop stop.

Gordon - Who, Bisly, who?

Bisly - The burnt woman.

Gordon - In the Beauty School?

Bisly - Seeping in, thru the fence, like the stench of a poorly pickled pigeonhole.

Gordon - With the pomposity of a peppermint fisting glove.

Bisly - She'll take the beauty out of Beauty School, and then it'll just be...

Gordon - Don't say it.

Bisly - Someone's got to stop her, or no more no no.

Gordon - Someone will, someone will.

*Gordon and Bisly exit.*

Professor - How badly do you want to go to Harvard, WK?

WJ - So bad I can taste it on the perfectly sharpened tip of my number 2 ticonderoga.

Professor - Then all you have to do is pass the test.

WJ - Show me the test, and I'll pass it on the right.

Professor - The burnt woman must never haunt our Beauty School again.

WJ - Pardon my jerky germanometer, but what's harassing a burn victim got to do with getting into Harvard?

Professor - This mutually assured distraction venue is dearer to my muted, mortared heart than sciolism to enormity. You keep her out, I get you in.

WJ - Where's she live?

Professor - In a caretaker's cabin at the Cambridge Cemetery near the junction of Heliotrope and Honeysuckle. But caution: she's the top brass of under your bed.

*Professor and Helen exit.*

WJ - If this falls through, I'm taking a gap year.

*All exit.*

*Scene 14 - The party. Enter Dean and Alex.*

Dean - Yo, Kiss, you out for some in?

Alex - O look, it's the quirk molding. Started any futilities lately, fugrunt?

Dean - Only settin up quiniela on your flotilla, bettin we beach where the bent things are.

Alex - I touch down where my time is up, so if you're counting on returns, go against me.

Dean - I'd gladly go returningly against you, and I bet I get me some placement.

Alex - By misplacement I thrive, like puke, like you.

Dean - Did you just call me puke, fire-tongue?

Alex - Puke.

Dean - If I'm puke, you're starving.

Alex - Maybe. Maybe all I am has spilled, and my straw's turned soluble. Maybe we only truly love what we lose.

Dean - You piss effluvial gems, my unplumbed urologist.

Alex - Can you guzz it, my emulsible oneirocritic?

Dean - *Tinkle, tinkle, indoor cock,  
And I'll lick the jelly off your sock.*

Alex - Your whistle is your work.

Dean - So warily together let us gussy this misplace: you are a woman, albeit poorly fashioned; I am a cripple, onerous, but functional. This wrong's ethical pittance is we should mate, squeaky geeky, in a sour alliance of losers.

Alex - What can a cripple do in a woman that she hasn't already overdone to herself?

Dean - O, everything. A cripple fits a woman more than man and makes her dumpy all the mute intended. Only he her dodgy spaces mumble spans, giving agency to her distended. He fills her pumice pain with runch refuting, insoling her contortion, rubbing out her dub, a trainer evolved to a toy, completing with new fangles what began her flub du frottage: emotion regarded at angles.

Alex - You talk like you might stop stinking.

Dean - I stink that you might start thinking.

Alex - Am I that sad?

Dean - You've been burned.

Alex - Are you hot to cool me?

Dean - Rumble, squawk, and blether.

Alex - Come, mutant; let's get sick together.

*Dean sings.*

Dean - *Dangers in the night,*

*Exchanging sad sauce,  
Skulking out of sight  
With their pants off,  
Wondering how they might  
Save face and kill the view!*

*Dangers with no likes,  
Two bitter equals,  
Tritely sphinging thru their plight  
Of boring sequels,  
Anal wart porn eremites  
Screaming "we craphy few!"*

*Tough shit sodomites,  
All stoopt and huffing,  
Disappointing genotypes,  
Worth only flushing,  
Supercilious parasites  
Sabodouching appetites,  
Love was one bad match away,  
A swift, igniting scratch away.*

*And ever since that light,  
They're stuck together,  
Bonded in their blight,  
Too much forever,  
It turned out so shite  
For dangers in the night.*

All exit.

*Scene 15 - The Caretaker's Cabin in the Cambridge Cemetery. Megan enters.*

Meg- "Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?  
What little town by river or sea shore,  
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?  
And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell  
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return."

*Enter Gas Man 1 at the door and knocks.*

GM1 - Gas delivery!  
Megan - The door is open.

*He enters the cabin.*

GM1 - Where you want it?  
Megan - Under the bed.  
GM1 - That's a strange place for a flammable substance.  
Megan - I like it strange.  
GM1 - I like it visible, so you mind hitting the lights?  
Megan - I'd love to.

*She turns on the lights.*

Megan - You sure you like it visible, gasman?  
GM1 - I'm sure I like to see what's around me  
So I don't go banging into something.  
Megan - Do you see anything you might bang into?  
GM1 - Not on the now. Are you Megan Fowler?  
Megan - I am what's left of me.  
GM1 - So you want it  
Under the bed?  
Megan - Unless you prefer it  
On the bed.  
GM1 - On or under don't matter,  
It's just, why the bed?  
Megan - To gas the monsters.  
GM1 - Ok, but I'm required to inform you  
That it's not regulation.  
Megan - Do I look  
Like I keep abreast of regulations?

*Enter Gas Man 2.*

GM2 - So where's it...O.  
Megan - It O's under the bed.  
GM2 - Is that regulation?  
GM1 - Do like she says.

*Gas Man 2 starts putting the gas under the bed.*

Megan - What makes you think I'm a she?  
GM1 - I dunno.  
Your voice and your dress.  
Megan - I made it myself.  
GM1 - Your voice or your dress?  
Megan - Well, well. I thought you were handsome, but now  
I see you're also a philosopher,  
I feel my dress uncontrollably chimming,  
"Do you like my voice? I made it for you."  
GM1 - It's very pretty.  
Megan - My voice or my dress?  
GM1 - Both.  
Megan - At least compared to what they're hiding.  
GM1 - That dress don't hide much.  
Megan - That's cuz what it hides  
Wants to be found.  
GM1 - So what's the voice hiding?  
Megan - The sound I make when it's found.  
GM1 - You live here?  
Megan - That depends on what you mean  
By live. Given it's a cemetery,  
I'd say yes. Given it's me, I'd say no.  
GM1 - Seems like it would be kinda depressing.  
Megan - I think we should measure our depression  
Not by the depression that's inside us  
But by the depression that's around us,

And here, all around me, are depressions  
Of such deeply piled deadlihood, I feel  
As lifted as the crematory smut.

GM1 - I'll remember that.

Megan - Do you like being  
A gas man?

GM1 - It's ok, but as we say,  
At least it ain't a blast.

Megan - I believe it  
The oldest, noblest, truest profession.

GM1 - And why's that?

Megan - Well, it's the oldest because  
The big bang was a gas delivery,  
And the noble gases, non-reactive,  
Inert, above it all, make it the noblest.

GM1 - So why's it the truest?

Megan - Cuz, you hotty,  
Everything's a gas.

*Gas Man 2 finishes putting the gas under the bed.*

GM2 - That's it.

GM1 - Sign this please.

*He hands her a form.*

Megan - But my fingers...

GM1 - I'll do it for you.

Megan - No,  
It's been so long since I held a man's stylus.

*He gives it to her. She tries to sign and drops it. He picks it up.*

GM1 - Try again.

*She tries and drops it. He picks it up.*

Megan - Maybe we should hold it together?

GM1 - Sure.

*They hold the pen together. She looks at the form.*

Megan - Your name is John?

GM1 - Yep.

Megan - I loved a John once,  
Then he left the money on the table.

GM1 - You paid me, so we're good.

Megan - What should I sign?

GM1 - You said you're Megan Fowler.

Megan - Well, I am,  
But I was hoping you might be after  
My autograph more than my signature.

GM1 - What's the difference?

Megan - No one wants an autograph  
From Megan Fowler, but I'm also known  
As the burnt, or rather, the learnt woman.

Gm1 - Yeah, I'm a townie, but I'm also known  
As a stupid loser, so sign your name.  
Megan - As you say, Johnny.

*She signs.*

GM1 - Enjoy your morning.  
Megan - Enjoy my mourning? What am I mourning?  
The monsters under my bed? The gasman  
Who held my hand? This backfiring body?  
No, I've lost nothing, or almost nothing,  
Cuz I'm lost as to how it is a man  
Of your heat who must have burned many women  
Still thinks I have a name that I can sign.  
GM1 - If you don't like getting burned, don't come close.

*Gas men exit.*

Megan - You will never know how close I have come  
Just to brand my ass on your hibachi!  
These rare, insentient gestures of transcription  
That trundle sad to traceless antidote  
To the shame we attain on joy's ghost bike,  
Time's rudest binge on sense, shall ever bur  
Me into you, for I'm your second skin,  
The fusion your delusion needs to stag.  
O John, when I'm so close your gills but gape,  
No more will that manscaped éclat, those looks  
You lunge behind, waste your inspurious soul  
On bolding concords of a false seduction,  
Nor shall I be as I am now, dissuaged,  
Irradiated, wedged away, defunct,  
In life's haphazard crank a snagging grain  
Of truth, to fact's affected faience glazed,  
But will throw back all crisp and rigid shapes,  
All stiff and bridgeless songs upon the clock  
Of paragone, and melt into our balm.  
Desexed, we will be sex decentralized.  
I'll eat you in my lust, yet there you'll lie,  
Not in failure's spite or a girlish gripe  
That dreams demise, but an avenging thrill,  
And we will flicker out among the stars,  
Extremists fastened, poised for the fair hand,  
For hasp and staple pinned by beauty droll.  
No, I will not cry. I will not cool myself,  
But fat the fire with my sweet petrol spew  
And send us to a suaving, flinchless sleep  
Where we in closer seconds may relive  
What none can now eak out this garish gap,  
Youth trappt in time, time free of youth; O John,  
You're so close I hear you in my silence:  
Hotter, hotter, hotter, hotter, hotter.

*All exit.*

*Scene 16 - The Cambridge Cemetery. Enter Mark and Clara.*

Mark - It burned?  
 Clara - That's right, and stopcock the gee whiz:  
 You clearly feared transferent inflammation  
 With all that run in, shoot your hose, and out.  
 Mark - Why didn't you say something?  
 Clara - Why didn't you sense something?  
 Mark - You seemed to like it.  
 Clara - O, so you had sex  
 With my seem? Maybe that's why it felt  
 Like you were shredding me into sisters.  
 Mark - Is it so strange to assume you'd speak up  
 Were it unpleasant?  
 Clara - Well, is it so strange  
 To assume you might feel it's unpleasant  
 For me when we're engaged in a project  
 Of trying to feel mutual pleasure?  
 Mark - How'm I supposed to know what you won't show?  
 Clara - You could have askt me before you asht me.  
 Mark - In the future feel free to clue me in  
 On any disagreeables arising  
 From our adjacence, e.g. when sex burns.  
 Clara - E.g.?  
 Mark - Exempli gratia, i.e.,  
 For the sake of an example.  
 Clara - I.e.?  
 Mark - That's right. Id est. As in that is,  
 As in let me say it another way,  
 As in if it hurts, blurts.  
 Clara - Thank you for that,  
 Professor Boring Playmobil Blowtorch.  
 Thank you for making an example of me  
 As your ample ex, thank you for using  
 My forsake for the sake of your keepsake,  
 And thank you for letting me know in what  
 State of vaginal smarting I may speak.  
 Mark - Speak? You bevel beneficence to blades.  
 Clara - All I've learned came from getting taught by you.  
 I came to class to schlob your case in point,  
 But then you pulled a fast one, didn't you,  
 You tricky little dictationist pilf?  
 Your wooden lecture on current events  
 Got me venting currants, my pepos spiced  
 By your efficacious comprehensives.  
 Like could I even bone up before you?  
 Like you restored the phd balance  
 In my creamy brainfood shake, like you sourced  
 My unfounded assertions, like your research  
 On all the unfinisht liberal wars  
 Organized my messy compositions,  
 And like, sure, it was a lot, but how to scream  
 With your syllabus up my ignorance?  
 To be cute and honest, I kinda loved  
 How you kept nudging me toward your thesis,  
 How you dangled your degree down my oral,  
 How you made my magna cum so laude,

O yes, my egghead, finally I can speak  
 My mind now you've stuck your post-doc in it  
 And given me credit for my common core.

Mark - Clara, I'm sorry. I'm kinda new at this,  
 And maybe came too hungry to the table.

Clara - Here comes the adding insult to orgasm  
 By acting like he really cares portion  
 Of the post-coital pogrom.

Mark - I do care.

Clara - Please, don't. Your care is too much kerosene.

Mark - Does it happen every time?

Clara - It comes and goes;  
 Sound familiar?

Mark - Do you know what it is?

Clara - No, do you?

Mark - No.

Clara - That's cuz it's my condition,  
 So keep your fucking audits off it, k?

Mark - Is it contagious?

Clara - Yes, Mark, from now on  
 Your junior condom's going to combust  
 Every time you spark a heated debate.

*Enter the burnt woman to the side, singing.*

Megan - *She steams in chimera,  
 Yet shies in the shorn,  
 She palms you messiah,  
 And brags you were born,  
 She begs you to profit  
 Then loves you accord;  
 Upstairs with her spirit  
 Wants wild cord,*

*But deep in the brackets,  
 Trenchant and deep,  
 Her seeching but shoots  
 His refusal to reap,  
 For look at me, love,  
 Is all her sick wish,  
 Yet off he peers on  
 For some graven remiss.*

*She exits.*

Mark - It's her.

Clara - It's who?

Mark - The burnt woman.

Clara - The what?

Mark - I have to talk to her.

*He goes to exit.*

Clara - Walk on me, bitch,  
 And I rape charge your teledildonic djeep  
 In a stonk of he said/she sadistic.

Mark - She's stalking me. I need to find out what  
She wants.

Clara - A burnt woman is stalking you?

Mark - In class, at the Beauty School, and now here.

Clara - And she's burnt?

Mark - As the earth beneath our dreams.  
Clara, please, she's getting away. Megan!

Clara - O so that's where this smash-up is headed?  
You've labeled me on sale so your cheap chuff  
Can drip my fire-damage to your crew.

Mark - Clara, no, she is real; you heard her sing.  
You saw her.

Clara - I heard her, but I saw you  
Projecting her on me.

Mark - Did you not catch  
Her molten face, her twisted, lightning-struck,  
Lag-convicted fins? How did you not turn  
To place that you might flee the source of such  
A forcible, malodorous adhesion?

Clara - My hate won't let me slur from what it loves,  
And it loves nothing more than watching you,  
The source of my eschar, go up in joke,  
Cuz as scathed as I am, as prickt by slights,  
I've dreamt enough of heal for one dead hole,  
And it is time to yell it like it fucks:  
Go die, Mark. Do it slow. Do it in bed,  
Cuz care is all I don't for all I care.  
See, what I see's your set list. You gon' play  
"The Old Spice Crescendo That Ends in a Splat,"  
"Why Weep over Heaps of Synthetic Bliss"  
And "These Shitty Trinkets Are All I've Got  
To Remember My Elusive Indifference  
To Your Repulsive Pleasure," but before  
You can start "The Delethalization  
Of My Testosteroning Animus  
Up in Some Sideburned Mantegrity Mank,"  
The rating cards are already risen,  
And you, boy, will not do well for judging.  
Your magic trigger will not discover  
Their prayed-for tantrums. The all-tongued gorgonites  
That float in fantasies above your sleep  
Will ever bring more pizza to the dish.  
And that fatherly habitude you have,  
That mist of the breath of their first desire,  
They will not stop til that shit's fritzt to shit.  
I may be the woman I feared I'd be,  
But you ain't half the man you'll never meet,  
Cuz your flamethrower's smack on the money,  
And the money's defaced with your dick pic.

*She exits.*

Mark - Her outed secrets are not mine to cop,  
Yet soldered to my soul the one I'd stop.

*All exit.*

*Scene 17 - The Cambridge Cemetery. Enter John Brown.*

JB - Here I am, Megan. Come mock the man you made:  
Squadhead, showpoke, logospasmatist.  
Look, Megan: me again, so back me up  
Into your severe satire damage.

*Enter Megan singing.*

Megan - *Living is easy, O living is easy,  
It's easy, it's easy that's hard.*

JB - O, hello, John. I didn't see you there.  
Either I've lost my lust, or you your looks.  
JB - What do you want, Megan?  
Megan - What do I want?  
I think I want to know why I don't like that.  
As in, that there. Like I don't like that there,  
Cuz where is that? It isn't where it was,  
Yet there it is, and that's a mess, and when  
It's a mess, it's not there, cuz here I am,  
But it should just be there so I can be  
Where I am not, cuz I was there, and that's  
Not right, cuz this not there, it's there in that  
Sense of a there/not there that isn't there,  
Or where I am, so I don't like it there  
Cuz I'm like that, I'm like that there, so there.  
JB - Same old, Megan; you want me to see you  
So I don't see you killing all I want.  
Megan - I want you to see yourself that you see  
Your wanting not to see me's killing you.  
JB - Then stop trying to kill me, et voila.  
Megan - You've always found yourself so amusing  
So you could hide your sobs at any social.  
JB - You have no right to stalk me, Megan. None.  
Megan - But if I don't stalk you, how will you grow?  
You shoot yourself with your self shoots, you know.  
JB - And there she goes, whose dream's to hack me down,  
Preaching my cultivation at her saw,  
Yet what is it she sees in me that it  
Is now so sharp? Her dream that I be gone.  
Megan - My dream is that you be again with me.  
JB - And to what end?  
Megan - To no end.  
JB - To my end.  
You want me to go missing in your dream.  
Megan - I do not dream. My dreams have been burnt out  
Of me, so come, dear John, rebuild my dream,  
That I can then destroy the memory  
You were the one who lit the fire in me.  
JB - It was you.  
Megan - Me for you.  
JB - You've never done  
Anything that wasn't what you wanted.  
Megan - Not true. I've done my time away from you,

But such is not a sentence I deserve,  
 As I did nothing save want time with you,  
 Which is only wrong because you are wrong,  
 So see how we are one because we love  
 Ourselves in how right we are together?  
 Look at me.

JB - No.  
 Megan - See, that is what's so sad.  
 You believe that by looking not at me  
 You leave me; I thought you smarter than that.

JB - I'm no smarter than the day I left you,  
 Save in this: I'm smart enough to not return.

Megan - Then why are you here?  
 JB - To tell you I'm not.  
 Megan - Where are you then?  
 JB - I'm in that there, so there.  
 Megan - There's no there for you because you want me.  
 JB - You want an organ for reality,  
 So wanting you's the proof of self-deceit.

Megan - A game you crush.  
 JB - I may deceive myself  
 To live, but you defect yourself, so die.

Megan - I'm far less defective than you, fuck boy.  
 JB - So says the casualty that I would be  
 Were I even once to wend her wishing.

Megan - At least I have a wish.  
 JB - I wish to be.  
 Megan - And where's the life in being? Truth is all!  
 Can't you, life's most devout, still run to death,  
 A false, irreverent echo diverting  
 Itself to end where it could not begin  
 So it can say, "I'm home" to who knows what?  
 You were the violet verdure of the mind,  
 Yet now your words can't speak for their disport.  
 Your self-idolatry's hypocrisy  
 For how you hate the way you love yourself.  
 What are you but a prisoner on the prowl  
 For some crowded cell? Once you said to me  
 Light cannot shine thru indignant spirits;  
 Why then do you look at them? Look at me  
 And have in one what all confers to none.

JB - Lam no more my way. I will have beauty.  
 Megan - O your stunting, fouling, raping beauty.  
 You hound that treat so shysty, emptiness  
 Alone can fill the void it leaves to being.  
 So symmetrical it slides thru youngered touch,  
 So perfectly designed, it fits to nothing.  
 Beauty is an addiction to the bland,  
 A self-erogenous disgust with self,  
 A fever popping fire. There is no truth,  
 And therefore no so there it's worth its want,  
 In a body fighting after beauty.  
 A body beautiful? It comes in blood  
 And spew, it trails waste and dumps its wretch,  
 It thrives on death and daily stinking dies.  
 Once a man sexually preserved in truth,

JB - What are you now but piles of abient pride?  
 Do not come near me, Megan.  
 Megan - I've no need.  
 The more I'm from you, the more I'm in you.  
 I am the garden of your honesty,  
 And you will ever gasping rill to me  
 For fuller breath.  
 JB - You are deformity.  
 Megan - Look at me, John, and you will say different.  
 JB - I cannot look. You cauterized my eyes.  
 Megan - Look, and they will open.  
 JB - Do not come near,  
 Or that star you wish for us falls on you.

*John exits.*

Megan - *He runs from me, girls,  
 And hides from my sight.  
 He runs from me, scared of me,  
 Leaves me to die.  
 My craving his courage  
 Has brought him to flight.  
 He runs from me, girls,  
 So why should I cry?*

*All exit.*

*Scene 18 - The Cambridge Cemetery. Enter Alex singing.*

Alex - *Popper, pop her  
 Bottled slop.  
 Dropper, drop her,  
 Like a lop.*

*Enter Mark to the side.*

Mark - Megan, is that you?  
 Alex - *Knives are spooning,  
 Lives untuning,  
 Dreams of dooming  
 Sick for shock.*  
 Mark - It's Alex, and she's tailed by that simp.

*Enter Dean singing. Mark stays to the side.*

Dean - *He's been pinkwasht.  
 Alex - She's a toss off.  
 Dean - What's the worry?  
 Alex - Keep me blurry.  
 Both - All recall what's best forgot.  
 Dean - Why the woes, wombat?  
 Ain't I wowed ya with my woo scat?  
 Ain't my distorted notabilia  
 Put some god zero in your omni-myth?  
 Ain't my heehaw pouty wrangler  
 Constructively misconstrued your grumpy*

Cat gif? Remember, wrecktember:  
You can run from the cripple pimp,  
But that impairforce shun's a roundtrip.

Alex - Run? No, I wilt, an aimless inextirpable  
In oestral clay fugacious, glampt  
By your underyanking, like corpses  
Swell and peat, like tease most loves defeat,  
Blades and breezes equal churn my danking.

Mark - She seems differently disturbed.  
Dean - Then what's all this cryin bout the cake  
In the cake? When worms get antsy,  
Ain't it wormy? You het up, there was water.  
Serve me dinner, expect some litter.  
But don't gimme that do me don't me wap  
Like daddy's got no fatty. You ordered  
God-damned god, I gave you burger chuck.  
So call your mom a fickle tit and look me up  
In the book of no good answers.

Alex - Blown by all your dusty, seedy rubble,  
Payback's muddy bubble makes the stiffened  
Wisdom wheeze, makes all senseless power  
Sneeze, all our transport, all our trouble.

Mark - O don't tell me they...  
Dean - Yo, let me fill you in, again.  
On occasion, you're someone's cigarette.  
But just cuz ya gickt a mutant don't mean  
Ya gotta be vicious, stupit. At least ya didn't  
Screw yourself to the political art market.  
What? You want humanitarian philosophy?  
Ok, here it is: I did you, so you're done,  
So you can repurpose that pumpernickel  
And splash huge ramifying ripples round  
Your antithetic slumming pool, but the fact  
Remains, my spirit bored a dispiriting vein  
In your spirited opposition, and the less  
You look at it, the better it'll feel.

*Mark steps out.*

Mark - I've had about enough of watching your mouth kill the music.  
Alex - Mark?  
Dean - Call him off!  
Alex - Touch my man and it's dunzo nut.  
Mark - Your man?  
Dean - Your man?  
Alex - My man, Shanky Dean the Velocirapture Submarine.  
Mark - Did he do something to you?  
Dean - Could you be a bit more vague? I'm almost losing you.  
Alex - He did something to me that can only be expressit by a storm no  
other man's the mast to ride.

Dean - I did?  
Alex - O Dean, it was so viscioulicious. Like you lit my gingko up with  
your flow in the bark shit, that boy blue paint gettin all viperous  
on my flashy as a near-fall sex site. Baby, you fueled me up  
enough for a nonstop to craniofacial belfie day.

Dean - So why'd ya hide it?

Alex - That's how I save it.  
Mark - Alex, can we talk alone?  
Alex - Yo, beta boy, I'm talkin to the Deano.  
Dean - Besides, all you do is talk alone.  
Mark - Why are you with this asshole?  
Alex - Cuz the more assholes I got the more I can shit on you.  
Dean - My girl's a hammerthrow on a crowded subway.  
Alex - No, Dean, I'm an embryo and you're a hand grenade.  
Dean - I like how that doesn't follow, cuz I'm all about the chase.  
Alex - You chase me so good, I mean all the moxie.  
Dean - Like a pill masser remixing your factory-set frenetics.  
Alex - I never felt so emphasized before.  
Dean - Call me the highlighter cowboy.  
Alex - You make the nerve swim, the rum foam, and the tunnel bud  
tenor ukeleles.  
Dean - Plüing, plüing.  
Alex - O just give unto the feud dude what the feud dude is for and let  
me lose my eye to the ball it's on.  
Mark - Alex, please.  
Alex - Yo, bitch, who let you in my cockpit?  
Mark - The burnt woman is here.  
Alex - The burnt woman? I'm so sick of hearing about the burnt  
woman I could eat the dog I train.  
Dean - Him cup, me bowl.  
Alex - Go roast your weanie on the burnt woman, Mark, and leave us  
Tongans to our mangos.  
Dean - Hosed by the hose of hoses!  
Mark - Look, I'm sorry I dumpt you.  
Alex - Dumpt me? O if only you had dumpt me,  
But no, instead, you tied and tortured me,  
Cuz apparently your shame hasn't flusht  
Since way the fuck back in never happened.  
Nevertheless, I am ever the less  
Unable to point the more I finger  
Other than myself, for broken crayons know  
Breaking begins when you open the box,  
And there's no sideways purchase whence we might  
That acrimony short-circ, cuz it's us,  
Flagrantly unobvious, dragging our bag  
Of non-recyclable aspirations  
To compost heaps filled with tinder fungus  
And stirred by pronghorn hatecore chavalas,  
So strung on fantasy we can't be stoppt  
To chomp the bit on why breaking the seal  
Is so unquittable, so riven fixt  
In our repubescence. Girl, fly the glue!  
We hear you, mother, but our need's so funny  
It uses us for its sarcastic source,  
And who could claim to know a cure to that?  
Like we need the love machine, so hot and loud,  
Bombasting thru shop-soiled reality,  
To keep its arcane production quotas  
Of smoterlich affluence that we might  
Just once take our torture for a tickle.  
It's true: life's a tit that leaks to let down.

*She exits.*

Dean - Nuthin like the afterglow of a weird three-way.  
Mark - You've had your meat, maggots; now I have mine.

*Mark goes at him.*

Dean - I can tell you how to find the burnt woman.  
Mark - So tell me, or I spill what guts you got.  
Dean - Geez, big man beats up on special kids.  
Mark - Tell me, you defective goth wagon tool munch.  
Dean - Anemone to Eglantine, left on Arethusa, right on Thistle, and in just a few graves, Fort Da.  
Mark - I'm keen to chip your rip, so you best not be lying.  
Dean - Don't chip it til I'm lying, cuz I got banshees yet to burp.  
Mark - How could any woman want you?  
Dean - How could any man want Megan?

*Mark exits.*

Dean - Bawdy wawa, what a wowch of a night.  
I'll have to do this "just this once" again.  
Then again, I seem to remember me  
Tasting sweeter syrups on higher shelves.

*Enter John. He doesn't see Dean.*

JB - She is a verbose blip of stupefaction,  
A clitless impossibility curve,  
The princess of persuasive paradox  
Who plugs the urge to wade in whirlpools.  
Dean - Here comes the king I loved just one night last.  
I'll sculpt his skull into my queller's crown,  
Yet what's in me that now I think to toss,  
With plans to botch the catch, this scanty past?  
JB - Crouching in lividity, seeking sense  
In stammer, she homilizes hesitance  
To the cirque, redundancy for difference,  
Isolation on osmosis, preaching  
"To know, but want the wall you cannot see."  
Dean - What's in me is his dull binary knife;  
Those rust stains round the man of steel's wrist  
Are my grubby gloves begging specimen  
For honey hips, but gall is all my malt.  
JB - I will press the cure from plump desire,  
Carouse thru caution, dig the telegenic  
So-be-it, for her fire's nothing but  
A dimming sheen from the fourth dementia.  
Dean - Yet even his putrescent leftovers  
Are tasty to my tongue. I cannot be  
Indifferent to this manhood's fluency,  
So back to what I was when I was his.

*Dean turns into Haydon and steps out.*

Haydon - I thought to find you in a green of death

With all the crepitude your life's croppt up.  
 JB - Haydon, why are you here?  
 Haydon - To help you home.  
 JB - I saw Megan.  
 Hay - Saw her?  
 JB - Spoke to her.  
 Hay - That's good.  
 JB - How good?  
 Hay - She is the home I mean.  
 JB - She is a home-sized sliver in my brain,  
 A smut fungus spreading eodic stopple,  
 A purification tablet absorbing  
 All my variance; O what is it shells  
 My memory out of me but her biting,  
 Gun-in-the-wrong-mouth dehomology?  
 Hay - Stop mistaking her for your defections,  
 And she will shine, your soteric beacon.  
 JB - You're just more stuffy slang for talking shit.  
 Hay - And you're just "I'm afraid" in a fancy font.  
 JB - Eat me, Haydon.  
 Hay - I already did,  
 And you're sleeping with the bones.

*Haydon turns back into Dean.*

JB - Haydon?

*Dean sings.*

Dean - *Nah, it's me, Cream of Razors,  
 Straight outta Golconda's gutters,  
 Where shoddy's always  
 New and pert, stability's  
 On a losing spurt,  
 And shallow depths  
 Are shimmied down,  
 Cuz do is low,  
 And don't is round.*

JB - You were at the party.  
 Dean - The party was in me.  
 JB - What is this, Haydon?  
 Dean - This is you minus Megan.  
 JB - I am out.

*John starts to leave.*

Dean - You think you're out,  
 But your grave knows better.  
 JB - What grave?  
 Dean - Right there.  
 JB - That's a nameless stone striving into sand.  
 Dean - Don't you see the body there beneath it?  
 JB - No, and no one can. That's what graves are for:  
 To hide sad endings from future heroes.  
 Dean - That's why the nameless rock's so clearly you.  
 JB - No more.

*John starts to leave.*

Dean -            You leave, and I'll stay here with you.

*John stops. Dean sits down on the unmarked grave.*

Dean -            Well, John, here we are: me and missing you.  
Lookin good, at least the parts I can't see.  
I tried to get them to give you a stone  
With something on it, but they said, "Like what?"  
And honestly, I drew a blank, so that  
Is all they wrote. But hey, it kinda fits,  
Cuz like if you left anything behind  
It's the legacy of doing nothing,  
Which ain't to say there weren't worthwhile things  
To do, it's just you whiled away their worth.  
So now I'm the only one who can tell  
This grand failure of distinction is you,  
And perhaps because your remains are so  
Unreminding, even I'm drifting off  
Into unremembering, but that's cool,  
Cuz in a sense the less I sense of you  
The more I'm with you, seeing as it made  
No sense the way you came to your senses  
Like a lonely wank on an unmarked grave.  
So, yeah, here we are: me acting like you  
To show you what you never should have been,  
And you hiding from me to show you how  
Loving a misper is living for death.

*John sits down on the other side of the gravestone.*

JB -                Thing is, dude, I don't like the burnt woman.  
Sure, I loved Megan, she was amazing,  
But this burnt woman thing is overshare.  
It's so symbolic, it's superficial.

Haydon -        Given how you're living, you're hardly one  
To call someone out for superficial.

JB -                See, I think you got your pot upside down  
In the hopes your plant will grow back into  
The dirt cuz living things make you anxious  
With all their wild, reckless protrusions,  
But upside down pots don't hold any dirt,  
Which is cool by you cuz dirt bugs you out,  
So you cancel others to calm yourself.  
It's Harvard's communicable disease,  
And you got it, you inverted fleshpot.

Hay -             My love of truth does not deserve your shame.

JB -                I too love the truth, when it's beautiful.

Hay -             Why follow beauty if its furor leads  
To otiose, marauded apogee?

JB -                Because beauty is good and perdures most.  
It orders us, without where-wondering,  
Stumbles on us, visits us in lockdown,  
Sanctions us, rewards our merits, provides

Our uncoupled organs with symmetry,  
 Cheer the discongruent soul requires  
 To unsleep. Beauty is the outstanding,  
 Qualitous nuance of our initial,  
 Eternal desire, prudent in abandon,  
 Phobaphobic, mining for pure power  
 In what true recollection can't extract  
 Out of our disjunctive correlative,  
 And without beauty, all would go extinct  
 In a conflict that precludes concession,  
 And we would then be only what we are,  
 Corrected crabs scuttling over scrap heaps,  
 Clawing for sparks on the sun, rummaging  
 Thru a long-shut sale, like a skin shedding  
 Its source, a nulling design, endlessly  
 Surging forward to find perfections past,  
 Throbbing like a thrill in a box, ugly,  
 Mutilated, a burn victim haunting  
 The mindful squalor of rejected splendor.

Hay - You're sitting on what becomes of beauty,  
 But all around you's what becomes the truth.

*Enter Lyuba, carrying Zhazha's uterus.*

Lyuba - O Johnny, yes, I find you.  
 JB - Lyuba, what is this?  
 Lyuba - This is baby, our baby.  
 JB - What happened, Lyuba? Where did this come from?  
 Lyuba - Zhazha say she have your baby and I go back to Russia, but I no  
 go back to Russia, so I take baby out of Zhazha and now it's you  
 me baby.  
 JB - Where is Zhazha?  
 Lyuba - She at Beauty School.  
 JB - Is she all right?  
 Lyuba - No, she no right.  
 JB - Is she coming here?  
 Lyuba - Silly Johnny, how she come here? She dead. Haha, so why me  
 here, not her? Cuz of baby.  
 JB - Lyuba, no.  
 Haydon - Come with me.  
 Lyuba - No, Haytem, I stay with Johnny. Look your baby, Johnny. It's  
 me you baby. Do you want and hold it? Look, it look like you.  
 JB - No.

*John pushes Lyuba away, and she falls and hits her head on a gravestone and dies.*

Hay - She's not breathing.  
 JB - O this is bad, Haydon.  
 Hay - This bad is what you are. Here, first and last,  
 Comes your reason to nap. This is beauty,  
 This is life's thin line of choose or chosen,  
 And it's low enough to trip you when you're high.  
 What are you, John, that your entire day  
 Is spent avoiding deadly avoidance?  
 Like some clickt-up dancer, you are aging  
 From grace to suet. Do you see her?

Do you see the desert you made of her,  
Your two minds evaporating camels  
Gnashing each other's blood into the sand?  
You are no good without Megan's guidance.  
Go to her. Dead end this demented gene.  
Her power over you will set you free.  
JB - What about this? And what about Zhazha?  
Hay - No one knows who they are. They don't exist.  
But you and Megan do.

*Mark is heard to the side.*

JB - Someone's coming.  
Hay - Go to her, and I will handle the rest.

*They exit. Mark enters.*

Mark - I'll swear that fuppet sent me in a circle.  
Like there's the grass where me and Clara...wo.  
That's one of John Brown's girls. Are you...O...dead.

*Megan is heard singing to the side.*

Megan - *There fam no finer trees  
Than tine about the graves;  
The laughter in their leaves  
Shoots wild from idyll brains.*

Mark - It's her.  
Megan - *From journeyed veins unclencht  
Swell hearty, sapid trunks;  
And every voicing branch  
Triumphals earthen lungs.*

Mark - This is not for me.  
Megan - *Than wooding out still hands  
That strain no more to chop,  
Weep-wet and heavy-cached,  
There springs no sprier crop.*

Mark - I've seen so much tonight, I finally see I'm blind,  
Yet there the certain sun; I see its beauty shine  
On what I now can say was hid by me from me,  
And so I go her way that I might truly see.

*All exit.*

*Scene 19 - Megan's Cottage. Enter Megan.*

Megan - What is it draws me dreaming to my man?  
That makes mind's melody of husky throat?  
His rough and soft, his crucial width and span,  
The pelvimetry whence I beg his bloat?  
These measures draw me dreaming to my man,  
But measures cannot measure all I am.  
Is it then his hope, his hype, his power?  
The freer space his luring motions gest?  
The winding words whereby he gyps the hour?  
His quiet hurt, or how it spurs redress?

These features draw me dreaming to my man,  
Yet features cannot feature all I am.  
Perhaps it's how I feel inside his eyes  
When they emit his frenzied urge to in,  
Or how his furtive animal surmise  
Leads my beaten path to some secret swim?  
These certainly allure me to my man,  
Yet certainty can't certain all I am.  
His ever being born beyond abuse,  
His respite set to grueling nature's use,  
His majesty amidst the dark diffuse  
That laughs at loathe and grants it more profuse,  
This, mostly this, and mostly other than,  
Draws me, all I am, dreaming to my man.

*Enter WJ.*

WJ - Excuse me.  
Megan - No need to seek excusal. We're all here to be walkt on.  
WJ - I'm looking for a burnt woman.  
Megan - A burnt woman? Is there more than one?  
WJ - I hope not.  
Megan - Then my advice is to stop seeking what it's no fun to find before  
you become what it's no fun to be.  
WJ - I just want to talk to her.  
Megan - Are you a fireman? Cuz otherwise, she's out.  
WJ - When will she be back?  
Megan - At the moment, she's all back to you, but she might show her  
face if you promise not to react honestly.  
WJ - You don't make the honor roll reacting honestly.  
Megan - The honor roll? Then you're much too smart to fail her test, and  
she only shows herself to failures, or, what's the same in her case,  
future failures.  
WJ - Try me.  
Megan - Very well. You are on trial for not facing my face. How do you  
plead, guilt or guile?

*The turns to him.*

WJ - Were you at the Beauty School last night?  
Megan - Can't you tell?  
WJ - You need to stay away.  
Megan - But I'm just trying to help, cuz now I'm beautiful, they can  
preach me; or if I'm not, they can teach me.  
WJ - You are unsightly.  
Megan - What to say? There are those with vision and those that can see,  
and I've just always wanted them to wed.  
WJ - You kill the vibe. You scare people. Tell me you'll stay away.  
Megan - Why are you doing this?  
WJ - So I can get into Harvard.  
Megan - Why would you want to do that?  
WJ - Why wouldn't I want to do that?  
Megan - Because Harvard hates the Beauty School. Academia is a sitting  
army against good looks. They can't compete so they shame the  
game. I should know. I'm the school spirit.  
WJ - Of Beauty School?

Megan - Of Harvard, dear boy. The spirit of Beauty School is the turnt woman.  
WJ - No. Harvard's school spirit is the truth, and you're a liar. There's nothing but beautiful people at Harvard. It's a factory for perfection, and I'm going to go there, so you stay away from the Beauty School, or I, well, I might just rough you up.  
Megan - Ooo, I bet you're a rough rougher-upper.  
WJ - I've roughed up a few in my time.  
Megan - Well, ruffity ruff, come rough me up, cuz all's caress to the never toucht.

*Enter Gordon and Bisly.*

Gordon - JK, what are you doing here?  
WJ - Getting into Harvard.  
Gordon - No, you're getting on my shit sheet.  
Bisly - That's her. That's the hideous bitch who lookt at me last night.  
Gordon - So let's feed this fried turducken her own syrxn.

*Gordon grabs a mirror off the wall.*

Gordon - Hold her down, Bisly.

*Bisly grabs Megan and holds her down.*

WJ - No!  
Gordon - You keep quiet, JK, or the only Harvard you'll see is from the server side of a warming pan.

*Gordon holds the mirror to Megan's face.*

Bisly - How's it feel, hideous bitch?  
Gordon - How's it feel to have some churrascaria catastrophe sasquatch upchuck lookin ya right in the face?  
Bisly - Face? More like the spontaneous science project of a chain smoker with butane burps.  
WJ - Leave her alone!  
Gordon - The boogawoof fritter you see in this mirror better not come round Beauty School again, or I'm tossin it in the grease trap, you hear me?  
Megan - Did Harvard teach you to ask a woman with no ears if she can hear, or are you just naturally adept at googling your mother's dick?  
Bisly - O you hassadiddy gangrenous chunderella.  
Gordon - Time to pinch the wick.

*Gordon goes to hit her with the mirror. WJ picks up a lamp and crashes it over his head.*

WJ - Get out or I make feet for kiddie shoes outta your skull.

*Bisly exits.*

Megan - Go.  
WJ - What about him?  
Megan - He's mine.  
WJ - But she'll tell on us.

Megan - So chase her down and kill her.  
WJ - What?  
Megan - It's all or nothing now.  
WJ - No, it's all for nothing.

*He exits. Megan picks up the mirror, holds it to Gordon's face, and sings.*

Megan - *Would you convene at Mirror Lake  
To couple midst the greening?  
The way wends long and wild, my love,  
But there at last our meaning.*

*Down whorling canyons, cross quick creeks,  
The struggles never cease;  
You'll ache and chafe, you'll curse the route,  
But there, at last, your peace,*

*As on her shores we new begin,  
Her every view reviving  
The life we lost by being born  
To thoughtless, fatal thriving.*

*For when you kneel beside her glass  
And gaze into her glimming,  
You'll see yourself both looking back  
And thru her freely swimming,*

*And as you stare, insane to stitch  
The sever in your seeing,  
You'll come into the truth of life;  
My being is your being.*

*Then into Mirror Lake we'll fall,  
And round her we'll go flying,  
Our bliss now care to save our source  
From all who crave her dying.*

*She smashes the mirror, cuts her his throat, and he dies. Haydon calls from the side.*

Hay - Megan?

*She pulls the body under the bed then cuts her hand with the mirror.*

Megan - She couldn't cut a figure, so she cut herself.

*Enter Haydon.*

Hay - What happened?  
Megan - Go away.  
Hay - Are you ok?  
Megan - Yep, half red, half trash, all supercell weather.  
Hay - Has John been here?  
Megan - Who's John?  
Hay - Megan, please.  
Megan - No. Pleasing's begging on an empty street.  
Now go away before I spread my scabs.  
Hay - Why are you angry at me?

Megan - Cuz your shit sucks.  
You told me to haunt his party, so I did.  
You told me to find his better, so I did.  
You told me you'd bring him to me. So did you?  
Um, no, and when I do what you tell me to do,  
But you don't do what you told me you'd do,  
That's a quickie mix for angry cookies.

Hay - I'm trying.

Megan - You are trying my patience,  
So take small bites or choke on my largesse.

Hay - I want it more, or as much, as you do.  
The closest I will ever come to him  
Being what I love, loving who I am,  
Is when he's with you. You make him the man  
I want more than any man I can have.

Megan - Lovers have a way of coming to look  
Like each other. Will you still want him then?

Hay - You swore to me, Megan, that was over.  
You swore you wanted what we had before:  
Poetry, ontogeny, civility.  
You swore to me.

*A knock at the door.*

Megan - He's here. Go out the back.

Hay - You swore.

Megan - Haydon, do I look like someone  
Who learned nothing from touching a hot stove?

Hay - When we sit free and fervid in the yard  
And draft our dreams to rhythm and image,  
There's nothing we can't learn from what we touch.  
O return us, Megan.

Megan - I will, I will.

*Haydon exits.*

Megan - I'll re-turn us on the spit of over it.

*She shouts to the door.*

Megan - The door, like she it cyphers, is open.

*Enter Mark.*

Megan - O, it's you. For the first course, second best.

Mark - Why are you shadowing me?

Megan - Cuz you're so hot.

Mark - That's it?

Megan - There's more, but it's just in the way  
Of my losing layers at your angle.

Mark - Its not being named is what's in the way.

Megan - I want you to look at me.

Mark - I did.

Megan - No.  
We look at what's beautiful. We look thru  
What's frightening to cower in its absence.

Be a brave boy, and look at my beauty.  
 Mark - I can't.  
 Megan - And you reck yourself a poet.  
 Ha! Then why you blank genital soju,  
 Daddy? Why you attack the muted muse  
 With scribbled perverse denunciations  
 Of the solid-state physics of your disgust,  
 Disguising selfish needs in timid thoughts  
 Like some passive, equilateral mood  
 Can reform that fear holds fast where it fell?  
 Only confusion grants us conviction,  
 Yet on you pose, hard to horror's heckle,  
 Abdicating glory the more you cope,  
 Too taken to be shaken by a song.  
 Were you one jot of what you deem your style,  
 You'd see I am mammatocumulus,  
 A storm cloud with tits, raining rancid milk,  
 And you'd open wide and turkey to death,  
 Where, absorbed in my opposing, fertile,  
 Impossible dreams, you'd finally exchange  
 All those valued, anaesthetic viewpoints  
 For one sordid suckle at my sex hex.  
 Mark - You're all fucking burned. Your legs, hands, lips, nose,  
 And who knows what else, shredded, fire-gnarled,  
 So what are we talking about? Beauty?  
 What is beauty? To live forever glazed  
 In roux of rut? To laminate our flesh  
 With furor? This despoiled evagination?  
 I will not pillage you to grunge my peace.  
 Megan - Aw baby, just cuz I call you baby  
 Doesn't mean I want you to wake me up.  
 Mark - I must at times be human.  
 Megan - At all times  
 Should you ever wish to go beyond it.  
 Mark - Inebriate with lost identity's  
 The only vice I hallow with that slur.  
 Megan - Then you must muss your muse, else for esteem  
 You fail on principle, sue creation  
 For irrelevance, bounce about mumbling  
 "Like my shirk ethic?" fiercely forgetting  
 What fantasies teach, it's smart to unlearn.  
 Mark - Beauty is my muse, I am fantasy,  
 And she gets musst cuz I dump her dresser.  
 Megan - Yet ask yourself, how good are you to she  
 Who makes you better? How fair your frenzy  
 For her most fair? Plucking chicks from their nest  
 And chucking them at feeders ain't flying.  
 Mark - This world is a meet between the sexes,  
 And tho unruly contact's righteous code  
 Adorns the queer facades of misconstrued  
 Emulation, the players must be free  
 To make the competition what they will  
 Within their fabula, and act on them  
 All down their lane, for such is strategy:  
 The stars in eyes desire beats to gold.  
 Distortion is no liberance from form,

Like love idealized no self-despite.  
 Passion for the product's still the process,  
 And the psychotron's two modes: on and shame,  
 So let the glamour floors boom erotic.

Megan - You set her smoldering so you can smoke  
 An alien nicotine and stay high  
 Enough to think it deep you've rendered her  
 An unrendered film about your problems.  
 If you want to live real implications,  
 Walk your needs avert from her, see her far  
 And strange and true, lose that run-away truck  
 And ride her phoretic, fomenting wave,  
 Intimate at last with prima facie,  
 For if you love outside the looks you seek,  
 Your poetry will sing as planets speak.

Mark - To be with John, you must have been...

Megan - I was.

Mark - Calling knuckles brass won't bring back your ring.

Megan - Only back I want from him is off my back.

Mark - So what's the story?

Megan - Why should I tell you?

Mark - Everything you hear's just cuz you said it.

Mark - I want to know.

Megan - Then look at me with love.

Mark - It would be untrue.

Megan - Nothing's true until  
 A fallacy bears fruit we can't resist.  
 Look into my eyes.

Mark - No.

Megan - Look into them.

Mark - What for?

Megan - They are not burned, but beautiful.

Mark - I'm sorry.

Megan - Look into my eyes, poet,  
 And all you'll know of sorry is their tears.

*He faces her, eyes closed, and she sings.*

Megan - *When you were born  
 I fell asleep,  
 When I awoke, you hid.  
 As I lookt round  
 Your stifled weep  
 My dewy vision bid.  
 Now I am here  
 Inside your eyes  
 You long to look thru mine  
 As if you then  
 Might realize  
 A difference none can sign.  
 But none arise  
 For we are dead,  
 Live only in the trace  
 Our looking leaves  
 For beauty's bred  
 Beyond our freer face,*

*And this desire  
By light allied  
Of common, kindling sun  
Is all we are  
That all we see  
Reflect oblivion.*

*Mark opens his eyes.*

Mark - I see it.  
Megan - Come and get it.

*Enter John Brown.*

JB - Careful, Wordboy.  
There's no decent living in the lightning.  
Megan - Life hangs fresh goodies higher than good sense  
Then sells us wobbly ladders dear and used,  
But if you can learn to alight the lightning,  
Decent.  
JB - Says the lightning.  
Megan - Says the goodies.  
Mark - I found one of your girls dead by a grave.  
JB - I know.  
Mark - You know?  
JB - She killed my other girl,  
So let the hours inhume her. As for me,  
I just wanna make a living living.

*Megan sings.*

Megan - *Johnny's girl  
Killed Johnny's girl  
So Johnny spit her rind.  
O bless the killers  
Of this world  
Cuz now dear Johnny's mine.*  
JB - I never said that.  
Megan - Said every never.  
Mark - This is not my scene.  
Megan - That's right, it's my scene,  
And you just bussed yourself in.  
Mark - You made me.  
Megan - No, I tried to make you, but you can't make  
The Great American Rhyme-n-Rumble  
Out of no acceptable rates of death.  
See, Wordbore, you're hard to be my poet,  
But too soft to stick it in my open form.  
JB - Hey, now. His Stylites held the pillar.  
Megan - He's a pornographer ashamed of porn.  
He feigns an odor to the fatherland,  
A frail criminal charging charisma  
His bills of defense, slogging the infinite  
For pro tem signs that beauty betters us,  
But fondling your pride's just more sloppy trot  
Thru the bullshit bazaar, shouting bullshit!

Mark -           And what's your stunt? Badmouthing morchella  
 Cuz you're a false morel? Carelessly tweezing  
 Your stroma from our sanies? Such a brisk limp,  
 Such erect dysfunction, gushing ridicule  
 Upon the hygenics that endue you.  
 If our purity's poison, loose what lips  
 You've left from its aggravating faucet  
 And leave the self-fracking to their boreholes.

JB -           I told you, Megan. Kid's got icky licks.

Megan -       He can talk stink, but I am rotten eggs.

Mark -       You fetishize revulsion to impress  
 Self-serving provisos of pulchritude.

Meg -       That's just my effigy of your flimflam,  
 And when you, in a wet venereal tizz,  
 Chinny-dip some peach petite for your sack lunch,  
 Her bald, pampered form your hot xanadu  
 Of stagey craft, I am there, in the seats,  
 My hiss smothering your jubilant moans.

Mark -       Yet the world's applause ever drowns you out,  
 Refiling your rageful inanity  
 Under "three-fingered dire wolf hominid."

Megan -       Problem is, I'm the now in your birth bilge,  
 Whispering out my wound, "new technologies."

Mark -       You may be around, but I'm on straightaway.

Meg -       Straightaway thru some slow-receding flood  
 Where women sprout, you yank them from the earth,  
 Wrap them round your face and dance thru the day,  
 "I found myself! I found myself!" Boring!  
 Over, over you go under, under  
 And up again, a rally fed on flop.

Mark -       Why draggle me if this is how you feel?

Meg -       So I could mock you in front of my man.

Mark -       To love such a bed sore's to frag your dreams.

JB -       Yo, Wordboy, you don't fuckin know me.  
 You saw me, you liked my girls, my party,  
 We spit grammatic garble at the air  
 And squoze our fruits in compounded presses  
 To divvy lexical menageries,  
 But you don't fuckin know me. I'm a prop  
 To you, and I dwell in the empyreuma  
 You on rare occasion rove and covet.

Meg -       His rizzle's just gas from the girls he gulps.

*Mark pulls out his poem, Ode to Beauty, and reads it.*

O beauty, sense has never shared itself  
 So fully, with such pure, excessive rush,  
 Such potent hue, as when it went for broke  
 And spun us you. Confusion other touch,  
 Yet when, with hope's huge hand, you tender spread  
 Your holist self-unselfing spectra boundless,  
 We bathe in a detemporizing light  
 Illuming ways to wander that ingress

The scintillative symbol core, and we  
 Who look therethru see essence unreduced,

Snort madly at your pollen spunk, relieve  
To be your trip of temporary truths,  
For bliss infumes upon the pheromones  
Of your frenzy gland, and coaxing all (need 2 more sylls)  
Biune life to link freely t our brains,  
You vertebrate the songs inscrutable

To lucid neolalia, sounding new  
Our innest echoes old, shot shapes reborn  
By demolition to pulsation's primal  
That grant the tongue its trophies multiform  
And snag a bud forever isolate  
That taste is one in service to the throat,  
With curves ineffable and welcome turns  
And flavors that hit every silent note

Of line's alluring obstacles to blench,  
Leading us, marbles on a wobbly maze,  
Into the ever-inward folding poem  
That is a secret teased into a sage  
Who loves the rawk of nature's ever laugh,  
The sexual shining figure past all sight,  
Who loves you, Beauty, past chaos or calm,  
And will for just one peek absorb the blight.

JB - I'd say Wordboy won that one.  
Meg - I sang you  
Better on our Burning Night.  
JB - Megan, don't.  
Meg - My house, my mouth.  
Mark - Your burning night?  
JB - I'm here  
To stave our living space. Why swim thru screams  
That rasp from stock entitled human pain  
Of imperfection struggling to perfect  
Its past when there are festivals of love  
Just waiting for our hands to yank our heads  
From the rage rehearsed of Adolf Quibbler.  
I'm here to lift us, Megan, over us.  
Meg - He hates to talk about our Burning Night  
Cuz he kept his cool; you leave a man out  
For a second, and he goes bad for life.  
JB - I let myself out of your bad for life.  
Meg - See, me and Johnny, back then, were a thing.  
JB - Yeah, like two trees thrasht into a thicket  
By self-propelled vortextual headwinds.  
Meg - He was at Harvard.  
JB - She was a hazard.  
Meg - But when I heard him read at Woodberry,  
I knew it was time to change his I.V.  
JB - She put me on that lethal drop-out drip.  
Meg - I became his muse.  
JB - For her amusement.  
Meg - His inscape bandog, his negatrix plus,  
His tour guide to truth around the bend,  
My goal to rid him of that natal flaw,

JB - The boyish need for beauty.  
 Beauty she  
 Brandisht better than this boy had ever seen.  
 Meg - Ours is the lame age of minor poets;  
 Sucking cheese out some sachem funding source,  
 Pounding the beauty pulpit with soft fists,  
 Ranting their pouts in one slim extension,  
 They lose the opposite sex to become  
 The opposite of sex so they can say  
 They're not offensive toward their only goal,  
 Giving us what? A one-sided penny  
 That could be yours as long as flipper calls.  
 But in the rare a poet's born who's freck  
 To dive the boiling epileptic cauldron  
 Of paradox, where pleasure contradicts  
 Its object, and respirating beauty  
 Into volatility, is major.  
 JB - She whispered like a limo on the moon:  
 "Leave Harvard for my hyperpoetics."  
 Correction, King: cudged by a keeper.  
 Meg - O we strode the stoitering gamut of sense,  
 Thru neologe and slam adventure flickt,  
 Careening crooked lines of nuance down,  
 Drunk on love subverting the sententious.  
 JB - Crimpt, dirty lurches were our bed.  
 Meg - The sky  
 Our shelter.  
 JB - Distress, inspiration.  
 Meg - Burrowing the earth's arcane elations  
 In an n-th orthogonal spasmic nod.  
 JB - Seducing our resolve with sickening.  
 Meg - Darker than the stoplight you didn't see.  
 JB - We lived inside the eddy of a poem,  
 Our metaphors commixing metaphors,  
 To hide from the Barker Narcs.  
 Meg - We must elude  
 Our predilections if we wish to sing  
 A truth that's only true because it's sung,  
 Which is the only truth worth its terror.  
 JB - Each moment was a pulsing, timeless image.  
 Meg - Every urge letter bound.  
 JB - What words we were.  
 Meg - Intention made the phrase, if law the line.  
 JB - The spraddling sway of matter was our meter.  
 Meg - The stranger the hitch...  
 JB - The deeper the stich.  
 Meg - Yet I could not escape the throttling nag  
 The grandeur of his genes was still to splay.  
 He took his plastic badge for the zesting sun;  
 His coming out was often looking back,  
 Like a stolen child free but funny for pain,  
 And that old habit, beauty, still remained,  
 Scrabbling the specs of some new perception,  
 His liquid text, that palinodic quagma,  
 O how I burned for him!  
 JB - But who the hell

Meg - Sees foreshadow in bright America?  
Poetry's a blind date with disaster  
That risks it all to drip one tongue-eyed dream.  
JB - Here's where the ghostwriter grabs the camera.  
Meg - We started sniffing ethanol, screwing  
In public restrooms, phlebotomizing  
Our nomic lifeblood into lower worlds,  
Til one night, pretty revved on regular,  
We went too far in the right direction.

*She pours water from a cup into her hands and rubs it on herself.*

Meg - I wanna burn.  
JB - Megan, no.  
Meg - It's water,  
Theater juice. Come sniff it, like old times.

*He smells it.*

JB - Ok, but why?  
Meg - Because you fucking flincht.  
You took me all the way then left me there.  
Now look at me: the dud parrot you made  
Of what you're too implied to manifest.  
So the least you can do is help me give  
My pain some purpose by showing Wordboy  
How we got to where he must never go.  
Mark - I'm good.  
Meg - But you could be so much gooder.  
JB - She's on the bed, basted in motor fuel,  
Her lighter up like Lady Liberty.

*Megan grabs a lighter and gets on the bed.*

Meg - We must lose our beauty to know the truth.  
JB - That's not a truth I want to know, Megan.  
Meg - Then it's the only truth; beauty's wanted,  
Truth is hunted til you find out it's you,  
Then you must pull the trigger just to live.  
JB - This is death.  
Meg - No, this is load-bearing life,  
And the roof your reveal. Blow it off.  
JB - I'm afraid.  
Meg - Fear's just facing all your fake.  
Come pink and pop and peal that disguise,  
Pulverize the meccas of miming me,  
Become the stigma, fuck the frigid muse,  
Let the real move your organs, magnet-like,  
As its dead fingers bum about your skin.  
JB - I'm not ready.  
Meg - But serve your readiness,  
The world will find a freer eye to please.  
JB - Such a temptress.  
Meg - My lure is only love.

*John gets on the bed.*

Meg - *Him I saw who was my soul,  
Another kist his hair,  
Held his hand thru cities foul,  
Caresst him here and there;  
He is my soul, and so he knew  
That from afar I watcht,  
Yet no trace there of this review,  
His body moved unmatcht.  
Yet as my soul, his beauty bore  
The mark of my devotion,  
Much like a pattern set before  
Our bond was his intention,  
That thru his voice, which is my peace,  
I hear alone his roaring for release.*

JB - And that's when I went backwards off the bed.  
Meg - And I went up. Line?  
Mark - Wordboy's got no words.

*She lights the gas under the bed, it explodes, and she and John burn to death.*

*All exit.*

*Scene 20 - Harvard Campus. Enter Helen with an envelope in her hand.*

Helen - Ladies and lessers, here she be: my future. A three story colonial on Professor's Row, and yes, that's original Flemish bond with walnut velvet interior; a lifetime membership and postmortem wall portrait at the Faculty Club, where scheduled presidents and ensconced opinionati in cashmere silk ascots and herring bone tweed define and dictate our culture's demising misconceptions over an exquisite saffron drizzle; an office, just anent the quad, spacious yet palpably fraught, tome-crammed, diploma-bedeckt, high-end Horchow leather wing chairs rendered appropriately proletarian by casually draped and responsibly sourced Tibetan prayer flags, where I, when "working," grill and grace my disciples with the hieratical minutiae touching on the bigoted injustices of the various dim regions, for, as any qualified prepster can see, though I primarily jazzle in general linguistics, I care immensely about the redistribution of tangible resources according to the principles irrefutably established by my illustrious peers; and, of course, visiting lectureships, during which critical stints of communal knowledge infusion, I venture, begrudgingly yet generously, onto the fly-over campuses of, how shall we say, subpar semi-educational institutions, whose accreditation credentials strangely yet adorably include such solecisms as "higher" and "ranked," and there I, a renowned Harvard intellectual, expand and expunge, enlighten and enfuscen, instruct and deconstruct, mere instinctual effulgencies of my apotheote status, taking few questions, leaving far more, crossing my legs to say "I'm considering that" while rolling my eyes to say "that is beneath my consideration," sighing with charitable disdain when some state school mumbletypeg quotes from an online journal, and then, with one final outrageously astute opaque observation, I take my leave, return to my

penthouse executive suite, and in the warm moonlight that seems to say “you are my earthly internunciess,” I open my correspondence, predictably rife with accolades and opportunities, and read aloud, in the oral tradition, for I am, beneath all my folie de grandeur, a woman of the people.

*She opens the envelope and pulls out a letter.*

Hmm, official Harvard stationery. A small, early listing of the vast territory I shall someday raj above.

*She reads the letter.*

“Dear Ms. Vendler”... soon to be Dr. Vendler to you, dear one... “Thank you for your interest in Harvard college”... no, thank you for your interest in me, Harvard College ... “After careful consideration of your application”... O, come now, let’s drop the formalities, shall we, for how careful must one really be when considering such an applicant?... “I am sorry to inform you that we are unable to offer you a place in the class of...”

*Enter WJ to the side.*

WJ - Psst, Helen, over here.  
Helen - Impossible.  
WJ - I can’t be seen in public.  
Helen - Twitter! Guerrilla Girls! Southern Poverty Law Center!  
WJ - Helen, what are you doing?  
Helen - An alt right reddit fascist regime has infiltrated our nation’s mails! Our civilization is under attack! We must stop this miscampaign of disinformation!

*WJ’s phone rings.*

WJ - Hey, dad. What? So open it. Yeah, yeah, O no. No. No. Yes, I submitted it on time. Yes, I ran my essay through nine grammar nazis. Yes, all my recs glowed like grandpa’s nose. Dad, you’re making those ayahuasca chimp set loose in a polling place sounds again. Dad, can you hear me? You’re breaking up, breaking...

*He hangs up.*

WJ - I didn’t get in.  
Helen - You didn’t get in? I didn’t get in.  
WJ - You didn’t get in too?  
Helen - I didn’t get in too? Yo, I got a lot less in than you.  
WJ - Yo, I clockt an upperclassman.  
Helen - You clockt an upperclassman? Ha! I sack-checkt a professor, and...wait, you did what?  
WJ - I went to the burnt woman’s house like Hazlitt said and Gordon and Bishy showed up and Gordon started harassing the burnt woman so I hit him over the head and Bishy saw it, which is why I’m hiding.  
Helen - Well, even if you had been accepted, you’d be expelled for clocking an upperclassman, duh.

WJ - Well, even if you'd been accepted, you'd flunk out cuz who's got time for homework when you're sack-checking professors, hu?

Helen - But neither of us were accepted.

WJ - Was accepted. The neither is singular.

Helen - Omg, my conjugations are already chaturbating.

WJ - We're rejects, Helen. Cracked cello bows, baklava that fell in the toilet, a spelling bee contestant who misidentified the schwa syncope in respiratory, rejects, Helen, going nowhere getting nothing being no one rejects.

Helen - May I share a secret, WJ?

WJ - As long as I can tell everyone, cuz all I've got for holding it in is a life on hold.

Helen - That feels like a bet I'm best to lose.

WJ - Then lay it on me, girlfriend.

Helen - When Professor Hook-Up bent me over a bust of Dewey and conducted my admissions interview, this zany thought dribbled out the whimpers I knew too well and chuckt my morgenbesser yeah yeah in the no pile: "All you've ever done, Helen, is take it in the rear so you can be in the front of the class." Like maybe not getting into Harvard means we got into everything else. Reject? Nah, I'm a freeject. And I mean to make my own way, the hard way, which is the easy way if by success you mean getting so lost the whole world's looking for you. Care to join me, boyfriend?

WJ - Sure, but what are we gonna do without elite degrees?

Helen - We're gonna burn so hard they'll say we're stars.

WJ - What, like the burnt woman?

Helen - You can burn without getting burnt if you practice good fire safety.

WJ - Fire it up, Outta Here U!

*They exit.*

*Scene 21 - Outside a Harvard classroom. Enter Alex, Clara, Haydon, and other students.*

Student 1 - Did you hear what happened last night?

Student 2 - I'm too busy cramming facts to hear what happened.

*Student 1 reads the news.*

Student 1 - "Three bodies were discovered this morning in the smoldering remains of a caretaker's cabin in Cambridge Cemetery. One casualty was identified as Harvard senior Gordon Mangusta Lavish III, another as John Wesley Brown, purveyor of an ignominious off-campus party barn, and one has yet to be named. A fourth person escaped the blaze and was treated at Harvard General for third degree burns. He was later cleared of any wrongdoing and released."

*Enter Mark, his face and hands wrapped in gauze.*

Alex - Mark, what happened?

Mark - I maybe got out alive.

Haydon - Were you there?

Mark - Not until I left.

Clara - Mr. Cute

Alex - Isn't quite fully down with giving it up.  
 Clara - He's hurt, Clara.  
 Clara - Yeah, who isn't?  
 Hay - Is it true  
 Hay - They're dead?  
 Mark - The bodies are too burnt to assess  
 Mark - What viabilities may linger therein.  
 Hay - Did Megan do it?  
 Mark - Well, if you know Megan  
 Mark - Then you know that with her you never know.  
 Hay - Drop the fucking snark and tell me how they died.  
 Alex - Omg, you are him.  
 Mark - You are he, Alex.  
 Mark - Equality does not alter the subject.  
 Hay - I loved them. John went there on my persuasion.  
 Hay - I wanted them to live. I wanted to live  
 Hay - With them, so please, just tell me what I have done  
 Hay - That I might terminate myself on truth.  
 Mark - You're looking at the truth. I'm what you have done.  
 Mark - But hey, that's why we go to Harvard, ain't it?  
 Mark - To get taught: that revenge has major stake  
 Mark - In the mistaken, that passion is highly  
 Mark - Perishable and must be refrigerated  
 Mark - On opening, that agony's ecstasy,  
 Mark - That only isolation can free its mind,  
 Mark - That fear is the single decorum knowledge  
 Mark - Allows, fear that mothers the million amoral  
 Mark - Hyperboles, fueling frantic echelons  
 Mark - For an endemic culture we can control.  
 Mark - Megan lit herself and John on fire to show  
 Mark - We both have and lack a stance for the violence  
 Mark - That separates our dreams from our desires,  
 Mark - So let you who cheered the speed apprise the crash.  
 Clara - Like this is so totally my favorite part  
 Clara - Of college – when the flowering injury  
 Clara - Enters the room and starts slapping everyone  
 Clara - With shame stickers. It's just so objectively  
 Clara - Instructive, it makes me wanna learn to talk  
 Clara - Without committing my mouth so I can say  
 Clara - Things like, "I'm not retreating or advancing,  
 Clara - Yet profusely I am pushed," or "Count thy wrongs  
 Clara - To know thyself," you know, so I can say things  
 Clara - So vacuous and skewed no one can detect  
 Clara - The fact I'm shoving my ill into their will.  
 Alex - I can only hope, Clara, that in the midst  
 Alex - Of your most precious confidences there lie  
 Alex - The least seductions of insecurity  
 Alex - And confusion, those open-air emotions  
 Alex - That let you feel love and hear the shy shalom  
 Alex - Its segues hum.  
 Clara - Stop hoping, Alex, and hear:  
 Clara - Your starving for sugar don't make me your sweet.

*Enter Professor Hazlitt.*

Prof - Today we complete our study of Keats's

Ode on a Grecian Urn, so let us begin  
With the final stanza, starting to my left.

Alex - "O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede  
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
With forest branches and the trodden weed;"

Hay - "Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought  
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!"

Clara - "When old age shall this generation waste,  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,

Mark - "Beauty is truth, truth beauty, -- that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."  
And now, if you'll excuse me, I have class.

*All exit.*

THE END