

I FEEL GOOD

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You, Jezebel

Since history
thought to tell itself
idolaters have gotten a talking-to
though looking around
you'll note history
versions versions of itself
on parchment with crusaders
haubergon-sleeved
and giving talking-tos
to Muslim-dom
which talks back
though incomprehensibly to
blonde ears ta-doinging
whilst swords smash skulls
and similar and verily
isn't it all in the journey
to the Holy Lands
along which
a hundred thousand were slain
something history didn't tell me
telling me history has secrets
and wasn't my mom right
in saying
how could we expect world peace
if we girls kept fighting
which we did
so blame Sarah Tina Judy Jean for
the toiling spinningness
the unsparrowness
of the tedious scroll
which long ago lost its restore-point
for that first yawn of things
hopeful and bright thus
muscling mythology
to birth litters of apologia such as
apples don't fall
but make us fallen or
a vapor wanting a self

selfed itself
while Sotuknang did the legwork
or a fair Phoenician
of Phoenicia-dom
Jezebel
rider of the fertile cloud of Baal
of Carthage
of Tyre
idolotrated
(she worshipped
hometown gods)
and was a skank
(she was faithful-of-futon
to Ahab)
so what's wrong well
lots if the papyrus is in the paw
of the Deuteronomist
who slurps one well of history
though wells there are a plenty yet
in the end
what does it matter when the usual
usuals, i.e.,
Ahab Uno died as did
his offspring and Jezebel
whose corpse was eaten
by dogs after which
generations blazed and
fizzled though even
now history scribbles
Jezebel flashed
heathen eyes kohl-lined
which'll be used for or
against you women first wave
second wave third wave
but please forgive that
history's yap's self-serving
was first unnoticed by
Sarah Tina Judy Jean
who were squabbling.

The Avoirdupois Chic

*More than once did he put forth the faint blossom of a look, which,
in any other man, would have soon flowered out in a smile.*

— Melville

My depraved indifference to death
sets Ahab to thumping his peg
against my leg so we'll perchance into
that which precedes an heir bearing
his bi-syllabic surname on banners bright
through the belly of the whale warm as
mutton and potatoes tea towel-topped.
If you can't bear a son, at least a splinter
Mr. Ahab says, for use against blubbery
blowhard though how, you might puzzle.
No intimate to his intricacies am I
who harbor soft-spots for heavyweights
fat as concubines, the avoirdupois chic.
Given the length of a life in nautical miles
there's hardly time for history to congeal
for the slain to raise kin underskin, the
abandoned to banshee dreams, or locust
to swoop hover and hum desert-side
Ahab Uno's tent on palmy summer eves.
Ecstasy is all it's cracked up to be,
insufficient, a means to a cul-de-sac.
Are locust merely in love with love?
Starting soon, let's no longer be afraid.
The locust are at the door, dear.
Well, set a plate for the happy couples!
Tomorrow Ahab goes with his gut
with its celiac flora. Sing a seafaring
song of fish fingers, ladies, avast! ahoy!
Childhood fosters the eternal orphan.
God wants what God wants.

You, my dear Ahab, merely want,
though That Can Change, a sea battle
dispatch, a motto conceived of
circumstance and truth, life's sequels,
now ebooks or available for download
at a workstation near me; you.

Claudia

legislate paper
draft a bill

name it
The Inscrutable East
Mother
Dialogs of Plato
cast

Socrates as Chinook
The Symposium a potlatch

the *eidos* of flesh the
perfect form of each of us

a woman

The perfect form is
a woman but hush on that
Tough enough a trek

out of Africa made
more beautiful
for ultimate
inaccessibility of return by

likes of me

Do we rescue
(a ship is burning)
Captain or smirk as an arrow
feathers his heart

Glad's another word for
the elephant felt up by
blind men and thus

elephants grieve
an impossible perfecting
of the heart
the impossible accepting
of the self

nine hundred hatreds
Each orchid in a bell jar
each girl in an orchid
each boy in an orchid each

movement of only gratitude
If Jesus dies for sins
of the west, his suffering
is just begun.

I Asked Jet Li

I asked Jet Li
to lift my belly
with snapped
violin string
perfect black hair

my blubber
in the shower
a handful of me

oh,

Tommy Lee
Tommy Lee
Tommy Lee Jones

with a rifle
a duster
Jeff Bridges hair

lifting belly
in the shower
with Gertrude Stein

oh, Alice,
unbuttoner
in a bath perched on feet

Woody Allen?
Woody Allen?

oh,
Miss Gertrude Stein.

Time Lives to Thwart Chronology

It's the same in dreams as in life,
I'm trying to figure it out and
missing the finish line,
a result of blinking fireflies
punching my name into velvet sky
(you'd be surprised the many ways
to spell Sarah — “goddess” with two d-s;
“layabout” with two a-s).
I must proofread.

Attention being equal to blue cheese,
me being equal to a bag of greens
a drizzle of olive oil
sliced antioxidants,
distraction equal to
a turnip driving a gray Mercedes
crumbled over the works.
Mindfulness is ready as
second-rate parchment or
certain cheeses to shatter.

Life's an actor rushing to the stage
breathless but on book.
God is Walt Whitman on Mickle Street
liking the wealthy well as
those we're asked to remember
(the lonely)
in our suppliations.

Screw the human condition.

There are moments I am satisfied with
the world's timidity and injustice.
I've breathed hard times—
hard times! I say.

A little punishment of someone else
might make me feel good for
a moment and—clear to me—
it's important I feel good.

Fabian Avenarius (Arthur Craven)

I can be anything. Leave me in the dark.

— Jorge Francisco Isidoro Luis Borges

I was christened Contessa Sarita Mujer de la Dia de Muertos.
Crones called me often,
my nurse called me Sibyl,
the workers, spoiled and worth it.

The world was my lover, the oyster my best friend.
Women called me wanton,
my husband, cock, tease, rapture,
my wife in the bleak of the night, “So beautiful.”

On my bed of many feathers, wings, many wings
dreaming five fields of chrysanthemums.
Rose-red. Cumulous. Sunrise. Amantillado.
And Flesh, a sixth field of Flesh.

“So beautiful, so very beautiful.”

Faith & Practice

Easier to make an enemy than beef Wellington.
An ill wind blows "Mandy."
No one can hear you sing "Polly Wolly Doodle" in space.
Oedipus is Supideo backwards.
Call me Sheena.
When you die no one can hear you slurp.
The Liberal Arts are no substitute for a hot bath.
Lemonpepper has come and gone.
As ye sow so shall ye perform a triple axel.
Mint jelly will substitute for sixth-period history.
Your anger turned to tapioca.
Your toes turned in.
That's not your bra, is it?
The guns of August are summering.
Inconsolable angels go shopping.
Satan covered the casserole with grated Cheddar.
A mist covered the sports desk.
The willow grabbed for designer Kleenex.
All good things must bend.
Sing glory for the Lord She is great.
Sing glory for the Host serves good snacks.

SARAH SARAI'S collection, *The Future Is Happy*, was published by BlazeVOX [books]. Her poems are in *EOAGH*, *Lavender*, *Boston Review*, *Gargoyle*, and other journals, and in anthologies including *Say It Loud: Poems About James Brown* (Whirlwind) and *Gathered: Contemporary Quaker Poets* (Sundress). She lives in New York.

