

RICHARD GREENFIELD

BORDER AUTHORITY 1

All of the wrongs projected onto the
landscape:

scape derives from this. It is easier than one imagines; this is the
surprise. Another century was more porous about crossings. Add a
man, landed in delirium, in costume, and get sick sublimity.

A concrete marker memorializes the
border. I was almost empirical beside it, a headstone of sorts. How
tangible the exchange could be. I operate within the rationale of peril.
It's not as pitiable as it sounds when uttered aloud. *Yes, it is.*

This was the year of the
census. They estimated the number of the species but ignored the
conspiracies it took to survive where one should not. Breathing
concurrently.

What happened
next. I strolled the line, considered in the binoculars of the border
authority. I came to a black lake, then the scorched grass of the playa. I
carried gear. A camera to expose the absconded light against the tracks
of passed vermin who during the pivot star night slipped desperately
into their watching holes. In my open eye, I framed the dry domain.
Blight, and blight, and. Adjusted the amplitude. Stopped. Shook tiny
sharp seeds out of my socks before

I slid into the quality air of the
drive away, roughly fused into the excessive plain and the curve of the
horizon, obsidian splay slicing past. Giant yucca strained in the ejecta. I
had no tactic.

BORDER AUTHORITY 2

Was a
surprise.
The locusts bloomed on the new year walk. The arroyo agents crafted
small bitter trees in the scarified earth, noxious plants among the strew,
granite, gypsum, alluvium, badland in the rain shadow, and droughtful
of all gist. Try again:

a bird
played
still in the dead bush growing from the albic earth, I didn't know the
name of the bird then: a husband bird— its singing stake in the wind a
tiny, vitriolic code.

Yet dearth forces profits into
intervals,
captures, contracts to foreclose upon, even in this chaste exogamy with
desert:

what
if, in the steps ahead, in these several economies, I could mortgage the
month? If I could make my lurching decision? To amend my prim
upheaval. To find my last filagree, my modern idyll. What if I excised
the debt and the endless payments to that abstraction (the *balance*) that
every year so terribly clarifies?

One
theory: the pastoral is full of many evictees, each the absolute implicate
of me, greed is evidenced everywhere, even in the gulf between sage
and ironwood.

BODILY OF WATER

Scaffold:

cerulean west, Venus risen, sole unstar, in the black east, the grand
wash emptying into a reservoir cupped by a dam, its builders men with
bathtub
rings in their eyes.

Grounds:

boaters building in hilarity a fire on the extrasolar shore, stacking
burnable material.

This is not the entirety.

Descending the concrete boat ramp, knee ache. Lapping rolls of
surface feebly sibilating at the feet. Some tall water bird. *Heron*, but I
could be wrong, legs less-than signs on a rock in the middle, fixed.

I hear arguments for less
government.

My father died,
and a night soon after, a man stepping behind the corner of my house.
I didn't think it was him as I approached it with a stone in hand, then
nothing. The therapist friend called it *normal*, the shock of the arrival of
the fact after having not spoken to him for years: the phone call from a
county coroner. I became aware of the rough feel sheets on my legs, of
the boxy bed. It's a substitute, I thought, wrong ghost in the wild
wrong for it. I wouldn't look, but connected it to the churning spring
stars. To the wroth.

This was self-numinous.

So this:

was where he would
be, with the senseless pulsing crickets. Or taking form in the redundant
smiles between telephone poles. The third week I called the coroner,
are you sure it was him? Already cremated. Yes. *Yes*. The neighbors'
allnight motion-detection triggered by moths. *Yes*, ignite, *no*, extinguish.

It *made sense*— a repulsive
phrase.

The unforeseen
beach, the superjacent night sky phased by Vegas light, the car stereo
playing nothing good, but its malleable, neutral, less governance.

Everything said is
crude. Is there anything left? Any origin to source? No one thinks of
you. Him, or me? This is not even happening— it's reconstructed from
the interim. This is supposed to help me. This is not. It could. No, it
will not.

But who's at the end of this
convincing? I am happy. The knee is pleased.

The tiny fire sulferous and shifting in
the void, unseen beach, patches of human speech and laughter out
across the void. Here, and against the old cliffs. It's fatal, private.

The critical heron is
invisible now, form less than action—that seems right—and able to
imperson the partial, beginning to be.