

2HB

# 2HB *vol.15*

ED ATKINS

*Us dead*

*talk love*

I wanted to ask whether you thought that finding an eyelash under your foreskin was significant?

–Because, truly, it felt pretty signal to me.

A magnificent and rare episode.

Or, at least, a rare and magnificent appreciation of a common episode. A moment afforded, certainly.

(Testament to the particular auterist, directorial technique: natural light, digital cameras, skeleton crew; to be ready to shoot if the cry goes up.)

*Ho!*

Sex, death. Intimacy and its melancholy impossibility. REPRESENTATION – exhumed, upended, turned over in the hand – either to discover the seal of its authoring or, with a little shock, to discover that, IN ACTUAL FACT, it's not a representation at all but the real thing: a curlicue of eyelash *disguised as* the pronominal self

– as I, as 'I' –

bedded down beneath the foreskin, awake to that sensitive ground. Like an implement of dowsing.

As in:

Blackened, dead dermis as incisive, essential, esoteric. As fucking deadly: there under the foreskin, clinging to the glans like some missing, nascent grapheme.

Lost.

In the way a fossil is impossibly lost.

That crippled, ammonite curve of mascara'd spines, smashed

–fucked,

–shaved,

–sunk.

(The unimaginable, fabulous skintones of dinosaurs.

Most audiences would decry a fluorescent pink Brachiosaur)

An ecstatic fossil. Unearthed tenderly from the sweet sod. Manicured hands in talc'd latex gloves.

Powder-brush brushed to reveal a kind of irresistible legibility.

A primordial story of separation. Of everything apart from everything else. Told brashly by two discordantly tuned kettle drums at either side of the stage.

'Intimacy'.

Producing its own fucking paradox: its charred, shined hand revealed (slowly withdrawn from a change-filled pocket or from behind the muscular back) – a surrogate for the impossibility of ever coalescing, of ever rescinding yours and my DISCRETION; 'intimacy' forming some heavy-metal barrier cream.

(At which point, a climactic spraining at the roof of the mouth followed by histrionic tears)

Ecstatic.

Ecstatic!

A singularity. Gazing down, planted at the urinal: an image of such searing clarity. Considering the circumstance. –Not a singularity: a plurality. Of meanings, thoughts, analogues, images – under the duress and heat and unbelievable humidity and toxic needles and taut canopy and pregnant clouds and slow air and purple, sourceless light of DESIRE! Compounded into a sweet,

slick sauce.

Accompanied by the carpet-muffled – subsequently tile-reverb'd – pub Foley.

Ammonia; dark sweats; citrus bleach; ready-salted potato.

An apex of the sensational, is what I thought. Which hardly trips off the tongue but does FIST the brain, necessarily.

I wanted to ask how you might have considered such a scene, if at all. And if so, how you might've interpreted it.

Whether your first thought might have been unabashedly romantic – a FLUSH of entertaining; a FLUSH of obnoxious lavender,

–Concerted fantasising upon the provenance of the eyelash in relation to its PRIVATE situation. The eyelash stemmed and shorn from an other's fluttering, crêpe skin; the eyelash trapped beneath your foreskin after a forgotten night of unveiled fucking. Or – more TERRIFICALLY – a night of average sleep as any other, with a for-granted-lover who, in our scene, hoves into view like a red ship.

Whether you would have *grinned*.

I wanted to ask whether, finding that eyelash secreted under your foreskin, you would have grinned.

–In waist-high-remembrance of that intimacy, that stab of pleasure; this eyelash proof of a level of congress, of an acute, sparkling tenderness; of eyeballs and penises, of nervous overload. Of your intimacy; of your CAPABILITY for intimacy (resoundingly proven here, thank GOD) with the eyelash as a simple, felt smile to brim over,

GRIN all the broader for the isolation of this urinal, the circumstance, the line of sight – the solitariness of such knowledge, the thought, the memory, here, performing something as perfunctory as pissing.

Whether you would've grinned with the plain absurdity of the discovery, which would, could, might perhaps be quickly, irrevocably inflected with a surge of (TRULY) love.

Whether your first thoughts would have been romantic or perhaps, in actual fact, judging by some of your previous work, your first thoughts would more likely have been morbid. Perhaps, upon discovery, the eyelash took on the portentous aspect of a curse; an precise black inscription condemning either you or – more likely – the previous owner of the eyelash, your lover.

Being a stiff wilt of dead matter, doubly-dead here: detached from its loose soil and buried beneath a thick fold of another's clay-like skin.

I wanted to ask whether this congress, between living and dead matter, would have struck you as sick, somehow.

As in, unwell?

As in, whether you would have reached for parasitic equivalents. Infectious equivalents. Gangrenous equivalents. Swollen skin splitting along hair-line fractures.

The SQUEAL of the wood on the ghat. Or the skin. As in, unclean – heretically FILTHY.

I never thought to ask whether you considered this

smell sexual or deathly. In origin. As differentiated from its reception.

Whether in identifying one or the other as the source you might in so doing demonstrate something of your DISCRETE LIBIDINAL ALIGNMENT – your somatosensory ‘calibration,’ as it were.

Really, I simply wanted to ask about what happened?

As in: what on earth happened?

As in: what the fuck happened?  
(What I wanted to ask)

For a long time there, it was all I could think to have asked. To ask what happened; to hear your take on things. To RELIEVE the unbearable pressure that’d been placed upon my own shaky testimony.

To ask such a question being tantamount to a very real demand for the exculpation of my

EVERY SINGLE FUCKING responsibility.  
To you, in the main.

The fuck happened.

The thought of a single black line drawn with a brush made up of a single eyelash. The rarest kind of sable, etc. In black Indian ink, at the head of a penis – in one deft, tender stroke. Ermine tailed. Barely registered: the slightest titillation. The other hand supporting, similarly tenderly.

The mark constituting a perfect double for the eyelash used to draw it; an eyelash grown backwards by the lover.

Meaning?

Meaning:

*–I didn’t think it would turn out this way*

(A line that should really be delivered with a perfect and matte indifference. Or not indifference but ambivalence. To reflect some sort of agnostic remove.

As in, a ballot paper spoiled with an exquisite essay on the process of precipitation. Or an immaculately rendered drawing of the back of an unremarkable, bald head. Or filling the entire ballot with a black mirror of graphite, leaving nothing but the metal eraser cuff of the pencil. Hours in the voting booth, distantiating.)

The smell was certainly sexual, I think.

I wanted to say that the smell was surely something originally sexual.

That the smell, perhaps, made me *feel* sexual. As in aroused.

Though clearly with some... posthumous aspect.  
*From over there.*

As in: the memory of arousal. The echo of specific arousal. Remembering sex at work. While at work, I mean. And with a morbid growl. –Thinking of a defunct sex act.

Sex with putrid caveats, rank rejoinders.

More than the usual, of course.

A residual stink, rather than something immanent.  
There's some stale, mouldered undertones – a *sporangial*  
ground – right there.

Either that or it's the scent of LIVELY excretions  
from a pair of corpses in stultified congress.

Or a pair of thick-set, crepuscular animals rutting.  
Black hair.

Glandular, pheromonal and utterly shameless.

Or the reek of some bundle of Neanderthal  
genitals: unkempt, ragged, swollen and tied off.

Caked.

Regardless: death – or rather, extinction – being  
explicit – being beside, beneath, on top of – the SEX. One  
discolouring the other.

Or making the other transparent with a perpetual  
expression of buttery grease.

(Those gigantic, bluebottle-snaring eyelashes of  
elephants. As in, the ice-shagged, arachnid limbs of a  
crustacean.)

Our courteously HUMAN bodies, apart from areas  
of glabrous skin, are peppered with follicles which produce  
thick terminal (pubic, -lash, pits) and fine vellus (scalp)  
hair. Varying quantities.

I wanted to ask whether you would concur that  
most (predominantly *blithe*) interest in hair is around hair  
growth, hair types and hair care. Whereas you might rejoin  
– or at least redress, reset – with a sentence like: hair is an

IMPORTANT BIOMATERIAL primarily composed of  
protein. Notably keratin.

To varying degrees, most mammals have some skin  
areas without natural hair.

The ventral portion of the fingers, PALMAR surfac-  
es of hands, soles of feet, lips, labia minora, and glans  
penis. On the smooth, bald road to cadaverousness.

Presumably the tips of penises used to be covered  
in hair.

Presumably the palms of hands used to be covered in  
hair.

Presumably the lips of vaginas used to be covered  
in hair.

Presumably the soles of feet used to be covered in  
hair.

Presumably the button-mashing tips of fingers used  
to be covered in hair.

Presumably the walls of your bedroom used to be  
covered in hair.

I wanted to put to you a thought about the formal  
cogency of the eyelash as a typeface – to put to shame  
the contrived efforts of my hand. That equivalence: of  
eyelash to discrete line to slight-inked line to compelling  
glyph – that 'I' that points back to itself, a chink in the  
curtain through which a mirror might be glimpsed. Only  
exploded, expanded to encapsulate the entire person. Like  
yet more eyelashes, braided together into a double helix,  
centrifugally spun to life.

I wanted to speak of a cursive comprised of a

single, sweeping line – written in skin, on skin and under skin; a line of dead, tinted, coiled skin, drawn on to the most sensitive ground. Held in place in raw, dermic proximity.

Subsequently, I wanted to say something regarding sex and drains and in relation to us.

As in, it could well be the drains.

Or us. The smell a consequence of our peculiar communion. Some invisible gaseous symptom, blurted out in a rush of hob-heat.

As in:

I love you.

As in, I love you.

As in:

an abattoir in July. Which is what I wanted to say – what I wanted to ask in saying so: to ask, to imply.

You wield what is equivalent to one of those bolt guns for thumping pig's brains off cliffs.

Or one of those pneumatic forelegs for riveting your audience by the thigh to this chair.

I wanted to say – confidently, unquestioningly – that I love *towards* you.

The misty idea of something weightless and invisible nevertheless landing, finally, with enough destructive *heft* to crater the ground or instigate a tidal precipice to run over a village or two.

That something apparently ethereal can neverthe-

less decapitate.

I wanted to ask about death and sex, then. Or rather, properly, sex and death, chronologically. Two sickly ruts of abandonment. That we love from within. From within the carapace of, etc. From within the concrete bunker of, etc.

As a steaming, *saucing* couplet.

How sex and death might accurately have narrated life;  
your life in particular.

Sex and death being twinned. And I'd only met them a few times. Through a mutual friend, maybe. Or more likely through mothers – theirs and mine, GOD BLESS HER. The twins that took great pleasure in riling those who found it hard to tell them apart. Performing, somewhat grotesquely, as the other. For various crucial mortal tests and WHOTNOT. –The only way to tell them apart being by some tiny scar peeking above the gingham shirt collar.

Or the way in which they run a right hand through their SCALP hair, or their mathematical or lexical capability or incapacity.

Or how easily they laugh, cry, flirt, fight, etc.

Consider Zeis and Moll: the grounded gods of [...]. The glands of Zeis being unilobar sebaceous glands located on the marshland margin of the eyelid, buried somewhere in the claggy earth. Emerging in the wet dusk to stalk juveniles. During the day, secreted in their hollows, they serviced the eyelash subcutaneously, excreting an oily substance not unlike jojoba, fractionated coco nutor

grape seed oil from their collapsible mandibles. Expressed through the excretory ducts of the sebaceouslobule deep within the central portion of the follicle.

In the vicinity, somewhere near the foot of the bordering range: terrifically active sweat glands called the glands of Moll. Being typically large and swollen. Tubular, crudely vertical, expressive.

That hair and nails continue to grow after death, SO IT GOES. In an Osiris equilibrium with the eyeballs, which remain precisely the same size from birth till death but whose precarious jelly and precarious function and precarious perspective are the first things to go to seed in mortification. Terminal hair will jut further, prouder – irrefragable in death. In ACTUAL fact, the skin simply in retreat. Back to wherever the hell it came from.

[...]

The eyelash answering *representational impasse*. At least genetically.

The problem I offer being to create something already dead, un-lived, but with the qualities of something that had lived. DIED.

Crucially *without* the actual need for that actual life and its actual, sorry end.

To make something dead without always already having to speed its death...

–I wanted to ask whether a demand for a modicum of LOVE was too much? On my part. Too much to ask. For a certain degree of EFFERVESCENT LOVE to fizz atop and sentimentally counter the toppled granite LOATH-

ING lying six feet above my brow. Whether I could ask that. Whether that were too much to ask. I wanted to ask whether that would be to ask too much. Whether in asking or not I appear more pathetic. Whether my being pathetic is in any way alterable or whether I'm condemned to crawl about the driveway at dusk on my belly.

I wanted to ask if love might productively be thought of as the faith that the body that formed the eyelash and, with a SLEIGHT of tender hand, laid it, like some foetal mammal, beneath my foreskin. That, say, love would be the devout faith that that generous, necessary body were still very much warm, muscled, alive.

I wanted to ask if you could recall the sweet, zoo-smell that accompanied the presence of the brush-like eyelashes of megafauna smelled the same – in some non-cognitive echo-located remembrance – as that fictional, a-gravitational space beneath the foreskin. Not space, but [...]

A unique kind of phobic concoction: claustrophobia, haptophobia, chaetophobia, phallophobia, etc. A plummet into flesh-walled caverns threaded with handrails of conditioned black rope.

STUPENDOUS PRESENCE. Slanted bodies among public architecture, pinioned by stakes or tethered to splints, scaffolds, armatures. The monuments that surrounded us being apotheoses of those kinds of pseudo-geological bolts of steel we often arranged to meet under. In the cool shadow of.

We would meet, grinning, gawping at one another as we approached from either side of the square. (GRINNING recognised in the other at such distances simply through the veracity of one's own overextended, mirroring facial muscles)

Averting our eyes from one another, embarrassed, until we were close enough to survive the meeting of our focussed, MOULTEN gazes – a closeness to rouse up a deity in the space between us, and be altogether compressed in our hug, our kiss and our deranging, faithful ardour;

–a kiss that begins perfunctory – dispassionate, even – but quickly evolves into something altogether more eager, devouring. Lunatic, even. Certainly lunatic.

So we kiss like long grass. Long grass concealing vagrants.

Or like polluted lakes.

Like those meetings of river and sea: a trailing line; a miasma hem of coalescence – bone-aching cold and bone-aching cold thrilling together.

Like strata of clay pinned by the steel-veined foundations of a city.

Like the once-activity of my once-breath and its once-temperature, its once-peculiar, metallic, frankfurter odour.

Or like two wet gods.

–We kissed and kissed, fashioned in one another's slimed and stupendously drunk image. And processed off, arm in arm in the slipstream of a divine chariot.

*(Fade to black.)*

(I wanted to whisper an ask as to whether your eyelashes performed properly.

*PEOPLE WILL WANT TO KNOW.*

*PEOPLE WILL WANT TO KNOW.*

Whether they were infected; whether or not something like a stye had been raised from the hobbled follicle. –Sore, to cast everything you see with irritation, anger. Whether that might have explained a lot.)

I wanted to ask about infidelities, about masks, robust limbs, coarse hair, Saturn, teeth set on edge, lateral thinking.

Beating gods until we're all exhausted. We down our weapons and slope off.

I wanted to ask what you thought about my desire to become a representation of myself.

How this desire might be partially satiated at night – every single, inevitable night – in the miraculous presence of a LOVER, who bears witness to my definite, inconclusive state change; my thick faint into repugnance and mockery.

Mouth open like a button fly.

Likewise the eyes, toy balls moronically rolled back to stare satisfied simple at that dark pink awning.

Chin slumped grotesque into poorly-shaved neck; saliva soaking into pillow;

unembarrassed blurts of fart, violent snorts, a selfish grip on the duvet.

Gravity pilloried by fat.

–Perhaps a few of those truthful dream-yelps;  
deliberate intonation as fucking meaningless vocalisations.  
Unngh!

Cocktail orders, for fuck's sake;

Pubescent whinings, for fuck's sake.

And that swamp of sweat, expressed with some  
unknown, nightmarish urgency – *unearned sweats* – under  
cowardly cover of darkness.

This corporal revenge – a genuine, concerted and  
systematic undoing of grace – every promise discovered  
*too late* to be a fucking lie told badly. The promise of  
intimacy and the promise of beauty ripped away to reveal a  
gawping, hyper-real brute:

An *almost* perfect representation of me.

Perfection\* only withheld by that small matter  
of the encroaching white dawn under the door and the  
imminent waking. When all of this might be noncha-  
lantly buried beneath several square tonnage (or hurriedly  
stuffed into the underwear draw) of language and a sprint  
of animist velocity.

Cadaverousness.

Cadaverousness. –As a counter to all these trainee  
murderers, these bastard representationalists. Who insist  
upon my follicular precision, the authenticity of my  
sprouting hair, my malfunctioning hair, my hair ending  
up on my cheek, retrieved by you, proffered up for me to  
pucker up and BLOW! and offer up a hurried wish to the  
patron saint of megapixels,  
superb particle physics,

real-time fur simulators,  
real-time FRACTURE,  
rigid body solvers,  
complete interactivity,  
terrific polygon counts,  
fully destructible scenery,  
gratuitous FRAGGING.

Of gunshot wounds, shining burns – of screaming  
and roaring.

I wanted to ask if you might context this by usher-  
ing in to the room a representation whose life as implicit  
(closing the door).

Rather than erstwhile, preludial.

A relation to life that coerces the cadaver into a  
being that does not require a prior life – requires no living  
human to be smashed into oblivion by some high defini-  
tion hammer for merely tuning fucking gods.

I wanted to ask, tentatively, if you mourned  
anything ridiculous?

–The passing of anachronisms, archaisms, even.  
Whether you suffered from bouts of fantasy for the quiet,  
sofa-bound end?

Together.

[...]

I thought about whether you might've turned this  
down at my offering.

Whether you could have passed me some paper, a  
pen, a drink – a *drink* – a *fucking drink*.

Whether you might have passed me a *fucking drink*.

Whether you could have just passed me a *fucking drink*.

Whether you might have summoned the heart to fix me and pass me a *fucking drink*.

Whether you knew the slightest thing about redemption, apology.

An understanding of 'sorry' as existing 'between' rather than 'of', 'on', 'from' or fucking 'in'. I am sorry.

I wanted to ask whether you'd considered the rather likely conclusion that the eyelash made its way beneath your foreskin by entirely banal means?

Like a worm mistaken for a brooch. Or rather a broken hammer mistaken for a fist-sized jewel; a fist-sized fist mistaken for an upturned palm.

A somewhat pathetic, plodding transit: under a fingernail, most likely.

Fingers retreading routine ground: rubbing eye, adjusting crotch, etc. Etc.

What this might mean for LOVE:

\*

Mistaking the utterly null for the terrifically important.

\*

What this might have meant for love.

A mistake.

I wanted to ask whether you once knew how to extract elements from a compound. Some vestigial secondary education.

Specifically?

Specifically guilt. From anything else. Whether a pale blue flame should be tended beneath. Or drowned in some pertinent corrosive. Or a frequency of vibration applied, perhaps. The heavy-handed pummel of a sub-woofer. The acupunctural possibilities of those serried tweeters.

Or simply neglect.

The application of arrogance, apathy – a lazy shove overboard being all it took.

(The concision of such a brush comprised of a single eyelash! Rooted in wood and restrained by mild metal! Welded deftly by a clump of acrylic French manicured fingers!)

I wanted to ask about pubic hair, clearly – the difference between pubic hair and eyelashes – the difference between those two toughened hairs and their slightly fairer siblings that used to blanket the head, spackle under the armpit, across the arms, fingers.

The primal, true-mole-down that coats certain faces.

The primal down that got SLOUGHED OFF about a year in.

To discover, from some recess of an illustrated encyclopedia, how pubic hair was the way it was – is, perhaps, the way it is – because of its LOCATION.

Proximity to dampness, heat;

girding genitals –

getting tangled, wadded, soaked again.

A distinct lack of exposure to sunlight, the sobering

breeze, snow, etc.

That you might have understood them as stalactites, accreted over a great period, silt-stuffed, subterranean; a raw architecture that, pictured in cross-section beneath an overground of forest, becomes a shadow –

– a haunted forest of hanged trees, shorn of their limbs, their bark, their sap; great heaves of plated dead skin, now.

I wanted to find out whether you recalled your first VIVID experience of death. When, in early childhood, you found a dead mouse in the grounds of a cottage. Your sympathy moved, you buried the mouse in a mossy spot. Remembering the place, you went back a couple of days later, and moving the moss away, discovered a black insect.

I wanted to ask if you'd been thinking about something dead growing.

Stalactites, for example.

Hair, for our purposes.

–Made up of dead skin, of course.

Thrust up through those tight follicular nozzles; the great prairies of skin are, in each generation's death, brutally compacted into hair. The follicle determining the shape:

gritted teeth and sewer grates,

pet baskets,

vacated honeycombs,

firmly interlaced fingers,

elaborate-tipped piping bags,

warm, warm,

warm spring mouths.

Pubic hair forced through some sort of carving of an eye the size of a follicle: a protrusive gaze; a gaze shedding death.

Lustrous dead skin being the only sufficient means of living beside and in material cahoots with, death.

Beneath: [...]

The maintenance of the acid mantle, regularly stimulating the subaceous gland. The wetting action. The physical action. The emulsifying action.

Your porous skin always having been partially Stygian, if I'm honest; latterly overawed, flooded, overrun.

Now

the only part of you that grows is your GORGEOUS hair, in a last spasmodic jettisoning of life as your ruined skin hardens in preparation for a final, chemical peel.

The only thing that moves, now, is your hair, in those eddies of that black water –

(the slipstreams of massive pike,

of egg-sputtering sturgeon,

of scuttling, barbering crabs.)

The only thing that remains now is hair; the indigestible BUT pre-digested and wretched remnants, heaved from the filtration system of a municipal pool.

A huge wet wig.

I wanted to ask you about toughness in limp-mattressed bed with delicacy, sensitivity.

An eyelash, mainlined to the mammal brain via some particularly susceptible blue prong of the nervous system.

Nevertheless stiff, tough – capable of repelling flecks of alien matter, of supporting tar-heavy smears of mascara.

Resilient, I should have said.

As in, resilience being testament to sensitivity alongside indomitability. A paragon of humanity, perhaps.

As in, sex, I suppose.

I wanted to ask whether you had considered the eyelash as an incision?

– A second urethral opening, perhaps. Lasered. Or incised with an obsidian blade.

For the conveyance of *other* substances from the body.

Words, for example. Guilt also, of course. Both presumably viscous. Painfully passed.

Or substances more pertinent to the particularities of the eyelash: rheum, tar, etc.

LOVE! –An excess to be vented.

TEARS! –A kind of covert weeping possible.

Darkening the underwear, away from PRYING eyes.

An underlining.

An emphatic ~~strickethrough~~.

As in:

an error maintained as visible in order not to make the same mistake again.

The dead eyelash as a surrogate for my MIREDD

sight, my GROSS intimacy –

– a slung fuck, of course. All of the senses confounded in the dark proximity.

(Apologies.)

There is a collapse here, and not just of my once sturdy rib cage,

my once taut skin,

my once fizzing eyes.

–A collapse of experience, of sensible apprehension.

–A collapse from coherency into incomprehensibility. A tourettic attack in the middle of the high street.

We are at once yanked, limbs and rancid fluids trailing, between our chalk-lined positions THERE, impossibly heavy on the linoleum – and HERE, clinging to the screen, held by static and faith.

I wanted to ask how you would have pictured my face?

–As a possible source for the eyelash.

Whether my face would be animated or still; in a diorama of close-up details or whole.

–My rendering HERE is something of a hash of these possibilities. As in:

Dead matter animated by jolts of mains electricity; the face entire is shown, but the skin, the hair, those distinctive moles and marks – all of that in some sort of abject close-up. Crude, somehow, but horribly correct.

Incontrovertible. Which is why, you say, reality is no longer

the contested terrain.

In repose.

I wanted to ask whether you remember retrieving the eyelash. Or whether, perhaps, you left it there, re-concealed it – tucked it back in –

–not quite bringing yourself to remove it.

–From that peculiar locket, if you like.

Left there to rot, I suppose.

Which begs an account of your foreskin as a particular kind of tomb.

A loving tomb, but nevertheless a tomb.

Being a construction site where remembrance necessitates forgetting. For the sake of everything, really.

Or rather, the giving over of the job of remembering to some indicated location just beneath the topsoil.

–So that we might finally move on, you know?

Or at the very least move beyond those more recent, ruinous memories, rumours.

I wonder if you remember the spoiling of the brain; the brain reflexively spoiled, so that images of perishing, sounds of perishing, smells of perishing, deluge the brain as the brain itself perishes.

*The dreams of a bearded old beef  
laid up in an untreated pine bed  
are great banquets of staggering offal.*

I wanted to have a good, hollow laugh thinking about the burgeoning of some commemorative fungus down there.

–Resembling the lichen that seems to bloom exclusively on headstones – beginning in violent yellows, oranges, eventually turning to a warm grey, finally crumbling to nothing under a passing sleeve.

The way to retrieve the eyelash being through the use of SALIVA – applied by the tongue direct. Or as a swilled foam on the tip of a finger. The thumb may be required in the final reckoning.

The eyelash, then: the germinal possibility for representational wish-fulfillment without the need for death.

A tiny, exquisite and *partial* death.

*A death*

that

*in death*

transforms into glamour, romance, fluttering sensitivity, a camp for countless glowering face mites.

A death that remembers itself. The posthumous skin of the living, breathing, lolloping body – in the most hushed, dulcet tones. Bed sheets balled up and knotted and dunked and soaked in vats of jet-black dye; fished out and lowered into sweltering pitchers of petroleum wax; hung to set from bannisters in pharmacological and cosmetic corporate headquarters; stalactites dripping separating black liquor onto paperwork, laptop keyboards, swatches of pH paper; plebeian mugs, executive china, data projectors, kicked-off heels, jogging gear, trainers; filling

iPods with fucking grunting, whooping, sincerely startling  
songs in long, meandering playlists; dialling prison  
inmates on iPhones; messaging amphibious animals who  
respond in halting sentences describing, in unambiguous  
detail, what they would like to do to you.

Everything slashed with heat, flicked pitch.  
In your honour; dedicated to you.  
A dedication, here. To you my love.

Every follicle a valve or a thin brass pipe in some  
vast, breathing instrument.

Come-to-bed and fucking die:  
Add light to some small pink star.

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*Those without whom the dead would have remained mute, dead, etc.:*

Sally-Ginger Brockbank  
Philip Atkins

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