

ALDON LYNN NIELSEN

## Poems

1.

Cecil's Train Set

—for C.S. Giscombe

In at last night from  
Chicago  
Lining red-eyed track  
Smothered clack  
Of post prairie ties

Ribboned cross  
Sleepless eyes  
Out the window what hard  
Highways

To bypass

Elevators gone from grain  
Exploded village backside  
Broken by abandoned  
Overpass

Uneven trees gone to rail beds  
Even tress belittled by overriding

There is no reparative  
Roundhouse  
Rather infinite  
Rehearsal

It was towns  
Brought the time  
Across the prairies

Bridge passage  
To switch  
That trains us  
To read that lost  
Phrase

Balanced on your bicycle  
Carry it to Canada

2.

{Untitled}

My father's lung

Concussed

Nebraska air

Rushed to the front

Punched out of Belgian mud

Was it the same

Shelling shook

Oppen

Shook me

Loose

It was not this sky

Wounded them

Both

Not this sky

"Spread so thin

That the situation

Was eerily

Precarious.”

To owe nothing

Whatsoever

To the fact

Of this shell

Save life

And all

Its fortunate

Accidents

Was the fate

Faced so many

Sons

It wasn't they

Stayed alive

For us

But they

Stayed

3.  
From KANSAS

Nor with the power of American vocables  
would I arm you in Kansas

—Charles Olson

Kaman's hawk riffing

With the wind

The roar in wings

When Jay's hawk answers

\*  
{Frank}

The  
Mothers

Of necessity

Sang

Kansas  
Kansas  
do-do-dun to-to

It was  
For them  
An invention

\*

They warned of burning

Kansas

Roiling plates

Planes of

Climate change

Antebellum broiling

\*

What's wrong with Kansas

That thousands

Crossed to vote

To burn against freedom

The very idea

\*

Stirring Brownian

Counter motions

Continental drift split

A nation along

Fault lines of fury

\*

Sheet lightning announces

An engine

Across those same lanes

Outracing its whistle

\*

There's no

Their there

\*

I'm new here

Gil Scott-Heron

Whispers from a passing window

In Brown's Lawrence

\*

Brakhage born boy

Soprano orphan

Sang frames

Painted his cell

4.

## Small Song

Really doesn't matter  
which way I call  
Night still  
Has a long way to fall

Really doesn't matter  
How long I pray  
Night still  
Will soon give to day

Really doesn't matter  
How hard I sing  
Night still  
Removes every thing

Really doesn't matter  
what I might will  
Night  
Still

5.

## Smaller Still

When he had heard  
Every note

He directed  
Himself

To silence



6.

Seven Series

(for Bob Perelman)

1

An end to all this

Eschatology

2

In tag football each player wears a white

Towel tailing

In tag-team wrestling next to nothing

Is worn

In Wernicke's area we play

Tails out

Untaped            Un tagged

3

When I fell on a rusty nail I was rushed

To the doctor's office for a shot

To prevent lockjaw

It left me prosaic

4

You close your eyes

While we kiss I move

All the furniture

Later falling

Onto the couch

You tell me you want  
Another one of those good kisses  
You know  
I've got

5

I have  
To hurry

Here

They close  
The dictionaries  
At seven

6

Exploring the tailings  
Vast heaps of them above the town  
Water seeping through poisonous  
Radiant  
They subside into forms too late  
To pack them back into the hole  
Without what was extracted

Rules parked rusting at the edge  
Children of a kiss climbing on the mounds  
Glowing  
In mutant morning  
Their little black boxes emitting acquisitive blips  
Their faces register

7

7.

Geotropism

A flower  
Bubbles on the lips

Opens with night  
Turning toward black  
Sky

Holding out petals  
For what might be caught  
From air

Roots thrust back  
Through the throat like needles

Coming to bone  
They scrape their way  
Through fine powder

In time tip  
Into heart

And opening there  
Drink in the dark

Above the flower  
Whispers

Trust

Trust