

On Your Performance
October 12, 2013

Somehow it always begins in the middle.

Black,

black and white.

How did you think it would begin?

I thought it would begin with a set of stairs.

I mean, stars.

I thought its interior held onto a hesitation.

It was erotic, the way

we begin in the middle.

Began.

You see, rudeness has its place. Not
exactly as interruption, but as reminder.

Let me remind you that at certain points
you indicated

hesitation.

Various forms are bodies and they move

through. Various hesitations are

a mother and a child. Any such

encounter, I was later told, is a catalyst for faith.

Black, white, and black.

Just like the mother and the child, the parts are bodies that

seem to become continuous. Continuous, but what

relief

that the movement was not a story.

How did you think it would continue?

Oh, I thought its going-on was an end,

an end in itself. The way

a body clutches this delay. Its need,

in other words, to

be a body.

Needs to turn its back on the other bodies. To light

the screen of its livingness. Hungry. Stars smeared across its face.

How did you think it would be?

The stars?

I thought it would taste like

something else. These increments.

Like lying down and getting up and lying down and getting up and lying
and getting dirty, and

Did you know that would happen?

What? That I would taste the stairs, that

I was a child led by the hand down the

That I was two selves, each dressed in black?

I thought it would not end because I thought

to end was to end in pleasure and continuously I

You want this thing to go away.

That is, you want it to be as it is, unlovely, the pronoun

that includes black and white, not gray, that is plural

when it is singular.

Tell me honestly, didn't you want to push

them down the stairs?

You?

(Elsewhere, you reassured them that there really was movement. That made

it dance.)

How did you fit it in

your mouth, no, your body, the background rhythm

of the stars?

How did you wait it out?

No, false again.

White, black, black. The movement

wasn't in the body, it was in

the space. The wrong pattern

hugs itself. This body's wrong

hinge is a catalyst for faith.

The stars fell down, but you eventually

gave up on reading them, grasping their words, and

they got back up. Or at least, recurred.

How did you think the middle was a center?

No, I never thought that.

You never asked how it would end.

You were holding

holding back

holding back the middle.

Like you say, practicing:

Faith was a catalyst for flesh. One body at each point

of the compass, but no North Star. Rude. A body reversed

to you, a body below, a body who made itself a face, a middle, and then

you who were not there, and watched. Clung. No, re-

minded the middle eros as it began.

Elizabeth, responding to Aynsley, Claudia, and Lauren. With thanks.