

*the life of az*



Owen  
CONNORS

az looks out from the  
sparkle in their father's  
eye and sees a woman  
sneeze right into her  
vagina.

CAREFUL they yell  
or at least try  
CONTAINS MY VERY  
SOUL.

a few moons later  
as the days got finer  
az popped out  
of that same vagina

their father held  
their slippery  
flesh in the meat  
of his hand n exclaimed  
to the nurse  
BUT WHERE ARE MY SON'S FEET!

az's mother  
perched on her elbows  
gushed with dismay  
BUT WHERE ARE HER HANDS!

az writhed in the palm  
amongst the goop,  
nothing but a start n a finish  
like a broken loop.

az loves the dark.  
THIS DIRT IN MY MOUTH  
they say  
TASTES LIKE ANOTHER DIMENSION

then one day  
beneath the earth  
az found the  
taste of dirt  
peculiarly familiar.

DAD! they screamed  
WHY DIDN'T YOU TEACH ME  
NOT TO FOLLOW MY OWN PATH.

the centipede took az behind  
the compost heap  
and showed them

all their hands  
all their hands  
early on a frosty morning.

az gives up on the  
prospect of sight

they sniff their way to school

their teachers' fingers smell  
like janola n they have to crawl  
into the other children's brains  
if they want to learn

through their ears that is.

something inside one child  
squawks n  
spreads its wings.

az loves books.  
they fatten up on  
couplets and haikus.

GET YOUR NOSE  
OUT OF THAT BOOK

bellows their mother,  
following a  
line of rhyming  
ink down the hall to  
find az, an end in the bog,  
like a squid w/ one leg, or a log.

from the lawn  
az senses all the birds  
n the bees sticking their  
noses in the flowers

COME they say to a near  
by sparrow YOU BE THE DADDY  
I'LL BE THE MOMMY.

the sparrow sucks az  
up in one gulp and spits  
them out high in the treetops

WOW, WHAT A RIDE  
az proclaims.

az spends sunday afternoons  
in the library with no one  
but their acne.

they squirm from book to book  
introducing themselves and replying  
in a higher voice.

in one book they happen upon  
shirtless silverfish raving tween  
the lines WHEN I DIES az says  
then higher: BURY ME WITH  
THESE GUYS.

az has pains in their head,  
their top half runs hot.

'OFF W/ HER HEAD  
the doctor mumbles through  
her gauze mask scalpel in hand

with one perilous slice  
where you should find the rib  
az became bi by which  
we mean two.

the azs groove horizontal  
like eager swimmers,  
text across the page,  
sleeping beauty,  
future present past,  
missionary,  
a nice rug,  
dragging their behinds  
behind.

w/ double the mouths to feed  
the azs move outside.

their mum kisses their  
front cheeks, she hopes  
GOODBYE

their dad gives them a  
good shake till they're  
dizzy in his hand.

azs dream of faces peerin  
at them from the dark

fever returns

w/o a doctor present they  
gnaw through each  
other's fleshy gutts

like biting off your cuticles  
but more chickeny.

TWINS hear one az deplore  
picking parts of az out of their maw.

the azs visit the psychic

YOU MUST FIND YOUR  
OTHER HALF she chimes

then the chorus sing  
BUT WE'RE HERE  
DOO

DOO DOO

DOO DOO DOO DOO

DOO

DOO DOO

DOO DOO DOO DOO.

az has an ache in their stomach, stomach ache  
WAS IT SOMETHING I ATE?

curled up in a figure eight  
burpn and fartn to deflate.

azs' fevers never fail to sync

on every day of birth, birthday  
they count away:

4,  
8,  
16,  
32,  
64,  
128,  
256,  
512.

instead of saying IT'S BEEN  
YEARS they say  
WE'RE ONE THOUSAND-N  
TWENTY FOUR each a squeek  
together a roar.

the azs meet a moth  
who everyone thought  
was a butterfly till  
they aimed for  
the moon.



at the next fever the azs  
lined up side by side

stacked near in rows

push the fence of the  
home till it bulge

GIVE US SPACE they  
write to the world

the world obliges  
with silence.

THE EARTH IS FLAT  
one az proclaims, insists  
they lead a march  
to find if this is

single file they pile out  
for months they march  
ass to mouth.


YOU'RE WRONG the azs sing  
in unison, wrapping the earth  
in a tight embrace, uncertain now  
from whom the thought did spring.



another az has an ache in their stomach, stomach ache  
WAS IT SOMETHING I ATE?

the azs look on full of concern  
opening az's jaw to peer in in turn

deep in the bowels  
neath three sphincters they count  
a sparkle is spotted  
n w/ the speed of a plague  
every azs' gutt knotted.



the doctor exhales, as if holding in spew  
YOU'RE ALL EATING FOR TWO!

as thousands of azs expel  
tapeworms all wrapped up in poo

WE'RE HERE TO INHERIT  
THE EARTH they exclaim  
as the ground begins to swell.



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