

# THE GREEN SOUTH

(2015-2017)



## BLUE COLLAR

A dirty tangle, loose ends  
cut open like cards.  
Empty fire.

Two men eat a valley of death  
and can't finish;  
a woman vomits herself  
and falls in.

A series of avoidable accidents.  
Runoff from gravestones.  
Oceans of suits.

## CATCHING

I am walking  
where waves of midnight  
crash against the milky way.  
Streetlights dangle in space,  
inverted electric fishhooks.  
I pick one.

Suddenly, I am a fisherman.  
My hook hangs off  
the bottom of the world,  
trawling air for words and numbers.

With foundations in the soil,  
and a lightbulb for bait  
I hope for a bite  
in a sea of stars.

But in hoping I hook only  
myself, something too human.  
We cannot catch,  
We can only fish.

## DUELISM

Sunday  
sidles in, she  
just hushes us  
as she ashes

warm, wet eggs  
sun-heated hashes  
we waste weeks to hail here  
to have soft chairs on bare caches

how we shift and shear sheets  
how we smile  
dreaming warm cream  
will fill our glasses.

But Monday, beaks ache.  
time skitters into seconds;  
it's tick for work, tock for cake  
everything is right, or it's a mistake

you check the clock  
shit a brick on a plate  
kick on some slicks  
screech out for the interstate

he checks info on steak  
but the steak is cut rate  
bukkake kills six  
update at eight

## FARSIGHTED

You took Quaaludes to fail physicals.  
You invented asthma,  
and claimed cracked bones.

You lied to the armed forces  
And now here we are,  
in a diner on Christmas.

My mushroom omelet arrives  
on a continuum, and everyone basks  
in the Sunday morning of it all.

## HATCH

The years ahead  
were a room we trembled  
to live in. But  
we found a hatch.

That's what you were,  
a door in our lives  
leading back to a beginning.  
Back to love that would have happened  
before we had met.

We waited in the way  
for you to come out to us  
but it was we that went in,  
bathing in the future  
the way people stay warm  
by standing in the sun.  
It was just

light

in there.

## IMPASSE

Foreigner,  
you are too late.  
To see our empty oceans  
is to know the truth:  
Everything here  
is the last of its kind,  
pure and unfixable.  
We float,  
but are barely seaworthy.  
Lightning will strike us,  
and we will burn.

We tried.  
We sent our heroes out,  
but our cheap hunger  
overwhelmed us.  
We ate their families.  
Now they too are lost,  
deadly and flailing.  
Please don't tell them  
it was us.  
Here, have a coin.

We made machines  
and machines to make machines.  
Evil that can run itself  
a thousand years,  
no need to tend it.  
Here, have a coin.

## TAUTOLOGY

My cold metal pedals  
repeat in the dark  
over a dark hill.  
I look up and see the neon,  
still selling:

Porsche

All Rite  
Vinegar

Hungry Jack's  
HOME OF THE WHOPPER!

These bright lighthouses  
burn in remembering remedy.  
Everyone looks as they slide  
over the horizon,  
looking for a saloon  
and a bed of straw.

Cities said never to sleep  
New York, Paris,  
boom towns galore,  
mumble to stay awake  
each a few broken bulbs away  
from being forgotten.



## MOON PIECE

People are single colors.  
Viewed from overhead,  
they are skinny and hardly there.  
Standing together they make a picture,  
but by themselves are brutish,  
and one color by itself  
is always wrong. NAKED MATH

Electronic winds whisper  
into our ears, and we wink  
saying, see?  
How in tune are WE?

We finger number sculptures  
and touch our tools constantly.  
We build bits of data,  
which when stacked turns  
into a pleasing picture.  
How Brilliant, we say!  
Does this image  
not imitate and ironize  
perfectly what it is?

Every byte bitten  
consumates an ancient equation  
we always KNEW  
about ourselves,  
but were afraid to ask.

## PENS I CARRY

Smooth black menace  
ergonomic and always new  
you looked expensive,  
even from the ground.  
You are the black-ops  
of ball points.

Chewed, red...thing  
You are an erratic friend,  
I am not sure  
I like the way your felt  
squeals under words  
rubbing the paper red.

Old man yellow,  
you are my grandfather.  
I depended on you  
until you died, but proud  
I still carry you around  
as a trophy.

Deep purple...  
your ink comes as wide sideways  
as my Hegelian confusion;  
neither ever run dry.  
My faith in you  
borders on religion.  
When you die, there will be  
the screech of dry felt  
and a flaming longboat.

## PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS LIKE TREES

Your mother says  
fruit is important.  
Your father says  
keeping your programmers happy is important.  
Our cat says  
waking up at six AM to put food in a bowl that is already full  
is absolutely critical.

But you will see,  
time is but a viewing angle.  
Your mother will say  
she never said fruit was important  
(it was vegetables all along!)  
your father will claim  
that he always hated other people's problems,  
(if only he could be given a chance to be himself!)  
It will all get mixed up.  
And let's not even talk about the cat.

A person is a single point of color.  
Viewed from overhead  
they are skinny and hardly there.  
Standing together,  
people make a picture, a feeling  
but by themselves they are  
brutish.  
That is why people are like trees, you see,  
they stand as themselves  
in a dithering crowd  
searching for the sunlight  
they believe in.

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE ALONE

The girl I never knew and I  
we were married.  
We recycled all the best old ideas  
about how to live together in orbit.  
Swinging each other around in space  
like moons  
no one was wiser.

Our histories enriched us, we wrote  
books out of it,  
we created our own theory  
of existence  
and discounted that which  
we did not understand.

When you get in bed with someone,  
you call all that which you know  
the laws of physics  
and all else is supernatural.  
It is becoming God,  
it is cutting yourself off  
from that which you do not know,  
it is establishing a forward base  
in another human body.

When you want to be in bed with someone, anyone  
you don't want to be in bed with anybody  
you just want to be  
you just want to be  
the bricks of the buildings hold  
sticky with mortar  
for a few years,  
and in them you exist quietly  
knowing that what you are doing during the day  
is allowing you to live at other times,  
feeding you  
bringing you happiness.  
It doesn't matter that you don't even want

anything, the world is a circus  
and you have evolved into a position  
of seeing it,  
of trying to record it, failing  
but still being happy.  
That is what it means to be alone.



## WRENTHAM RESERVOIR

My sister's chubby cheeks, sticky with  
Cantelope flavored drool.

Rafters bouncing wooden light  
around our country kitchen.

A pony in the back yard, mowing our lawn  
With her yanking mouth.

A sea of prickles past the grass, I think  
I can see blackberries.

Running naked through the sprinkler, everyone's home  
but no one is watching.

Hanging by my pants from the picket fence,  
yelling for anyone

A granite slab over the septic tank  
where we thought the secrets slept.

That stuffy basement,  
filled with dusty fishbowls and dead spiders!