being a poet (waitress sonnet)

 after Catullus 51

tips too much, that god sitting across from you, again

and again, these extravagant gestures, it brings

me down, brings down

sense and tongue, he, resounding

with my longing, seems to me like a mirror, eyeing

my fleeting glances, my feet tripping

over chairs, idle laughter

or was it coins resounding, seizing the time

yet revelry runs fiercely

through my senses

as if through the burning house of poetry

my mouth lit up

with dazzling fire, one day

I’ll say something

trippy (bedroom sonnet)

 after Catullus 2

trippy, this bird

you let under the sheet

of your shirt, eyes

on me, making light

of the weight

of your feelings, a skittering

on your skin, if it hurts

you’re asking for it

should be soaring like a god

into the sky, should be

pouring out an ecstasy of song, should

should should should should should should

should should should

should should should

status update (high school sonnet)

 after Catullus 5

types too much, that girl sitting over her screen, a hundred

likes, a thousand friends, lit up

with envy, let her set

at nothing our love, let us let loose

our escapades in the light

of an old reality, let them mark our absences

unjustified while the sun

burns our skin,

let rumours on the count of a thousand fly

like sand, if you

on the count of a thousand

update your status,

on the count of a hundred

I will update mine

through and through (party sonnet)

                        after Catullus 27

tip this out, I won’t be served with

watered down wine, this is

wine procured by

a *prefect,*drunker than

a drunk grape,

setting an example

I feel

I should follow…

so, off with *you*, water, you toxic

substance, too late

to effect a cure on me, I’m drunk

through and through,

it has spread to my nymph-nodes –

I’m [hic] all wine’s

tastes like wine (dawn sonnet)

 after Catullus 48

tastes like wine, this boy sitting across from me, his

honey eyes looking like yours as he implores

me to join him on the floor

the table a low ceiling swirling

like a chandelier

in the earthquake of these kisses

table legs circling

like the blades of a combine harvester

every kiss is a near miss

my heart escaping like a mouse

into the corn

the summer’s sun all rolled into one

ripeness I can

never get enough of

down and out (detention sonnet)

 after Catullus 87

*so* tempted to tip over these chairs outside the office

in which supposedly

you are accounting for our behaviour

as I will be asked, on my part, to account

in turn

when you will take your place

on one of these untipped chairs, this one

perhaps, still warm

as if *anyone* could account for a love

like I offer you –

I offer you my unlimited liability

like origami

let’s fold ourselves

down and out

without salt, without drowning (Icarus sonnet)

 after Catullus 86

tips almost to the floor, the chair held by that girl in brown

gesticulating so wildly, declaiming

the necessity for opposites to stay within categories

or you might as well call Icarus

the opposite of…of…a *duvet.* And *look*

at everyone fall in love with her

at the thought of her under a duvet,

everyone

except me, too far already fallen

from a sun bleaching

out any other beauty from the world

I have no taste for

beauty without salt, without

drowning

written on water (dispersal sonnet)

 after Catullus 70

falling asleep to your dissolving Instagram

your revisions of our history

I dream a skittering twitter feed

and wake to find it real

one betrayal after another

pixels of me soaring

from screen to cloud to screen

bringing me down

when you said you would call our child Perusal

I thought

I could be with you forever

now I think

one day I will call a child

Dispersal

I, a windowsill (magnet sonnet)

after Catullus 75

you, a magnet and I, quivering filings

you, a window and I, quivering air

I cannot desist in loving you

more and more

even as I like you less

I couldn’t like you

now even if

there was nothing not to like

you could be perfect

and I would be

wooden

I, a windowsill and you, a bird

singing as my crumbs

grow stale

caught in your teeth (Lysistrata sonnet)

            after Catullus 37

a tip, a tavern, a brothel, an army encampment

in which your whole cast is at war with each other, don’t think

I’m sorry to be out of this heteronormative

production put on year after year

I prefer my own lines

this spray can a more potent prop

than the cardboard cocks

of your latest crushes

taken aside for extra rehearsals

after which

you have curly hairs caught in your teeth

don’t think I care what your mouth tastes like now

(of whom your mouth tastes)

I’m going to write something beautiful

too much pleasure (phone sonnet)

 after Catullus 83

takes too much pleasure, he does, in your

idle laughter, your insults, as you

put me down

again and again, like

a phone you can’t stop playing with

your eyes flickering

over his shoulder

where I’m not looking at you

but I hear you

and can’t see how he can’t know

if you can’t stop talking about me

it is just a matter of time

I’m not even waiting on you

you’re already on fire

I love and I hate (equation sonnet)

 after Catullus 85

if I am north to your south I am south to your south too

if permeability measures the ability

to support a magnetic field

within the self

I am permeable to the inverse ratio

of your perfection

attracted and repelled till my teeth

are audible across the room, beyond the skies

racing the Beatles song “Across the Universe”

to reach some distant form of life

which will be wondering, why would I compose

such a complicated feeling-equation?

I don’t know

I just feel it

taking off (note sonnet)

 after Catullus 11

taking off as soon as the year ends

is the sum total of the plan

staying somewhere with a hundred stars

over my head

where I can lie awake listening

to a thousand waves

bettering themselves on the shores

before giving it all up

and as for you, maybe you will

find a minute between hand jobs

to read the note I’ll leave you

which will say nothing

since I’ll be as free of you as the sea is free

of stars, the sky is free of sand

being cold (bonfire sonnet)

 after Catullus 8

time it right and you’ll be already there on the other side

of the flames, not seeing me, flames

reflected in the puddles, I’ll be

cold, the skin hot on my face, gulls

lifting and soaring, pulling on my feelings

like music, strung out, the way

I let you direct me however you wanted, banking

and swerving, but now

the pressure is off, you’ve got no one

lining up with offerings, begging

for a part, and I

will love you on the other side of the flames

just as long as the fire keeps on burning

then I’ll stop