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construct

CONTS

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TRUC

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Poems and prose are written by Future Collective

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Masthead photo:
Self-Portrait by Felix Vallotton, 1897

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editor's note

We live in a society that's pushing us further and further into ourselves.

A cornered rat can bite a cat…they say
but they also say a lot of other things
about rats that are left to die and rot
we've been pushed and shoved by bullies
masquerading as friends and devoted lovers
Fuck fakers! Fuck fakers! we chant in our little bubbles
and there's definitely a whole lot of fuckin' and a lot of fakin'
and just because we chant doesn't mean we don't do it too
that's all it takes for us to stay in our caves
we hoard the darkness of our times while hoping that
the light from a little rectangle is going to illuminate our minds
the little rectangle that tells us to love and tells us to like
and tells us to type shit we don't mean just so people will
love us and like us in return even if they don't mean it either

We live in a society that's pushing us further and further into ourselves.

We are confused and we don't want to admit it.
We are lab rats lost in a maze
because we forgot what cheese smells like.
We are exhausted and exhausting ourselves even further
by turning to short-term remedies that work for a while
but then what? But then what?
Then we wait. Then we find others who are also waiting.
Then we talk about what to do about this whole situation
and we wriggle out of denial together.
We crawl out of our caves.
We invent new expressions in which
there's no reason for a rat to bite a cat
because there won't be any corners to be backed into.

Dasht-e Kavir

C10H12N2O

dibakar ikan akhir pekan, esoknya dicengkiwing estetika steril, personal-impersonal, bos nyamar jadi sejawat, dispenser turun bero, hujan deras cemilan warung, pabrik di balik sepasang bola mata,

beak baraha? kopi atau soda? biru, pink, built-up, ubi, panadol?

sek, sek

jadi yang kemarin itu apa?
kibul-kibul metropolitan~

kabur dari iklan, adware, spyware, malware, internetpositif dot uzone dot id

lebih omnipresent dari si Doi

ngacak hard disk urunan, klak-klik fragment pojokan

SSD

cari yang bukan Geledek Anak Presiden, omong kosong dansa-dansi, daur ulang Harvey Malaihollo, throwback terus sampe mampus, endorsan babang rokok, wahai pemuda mengapa wajahmu penyok?

apakahakuadadikuburanataumerekamengundangjenazah?

eits nanti dulu ternyata yang baru lebih baik!

(ceunah mereun)

barengan sama Pakde, sowing paddy di ujung sanaaah!

babat sini babat situ, gebuk anu sikat ini, JJS paling ena'

festival RPJMN kartel kancah, asoy geboy semuaaahhh!

tukang kuras listrik teriak-teriak:

أنا الحق//أنا الحق//أنا الحق//أنا الحق

sampe bengong diciduk basian awkward

influencer

ketiban pulung infiltrasi 0.02 liter

life starter/dream killer

they are a pack of predators acting like preys,

throwing pity party to lure their victims;

daun muda, kimcil, dede-dede,

or whatever derogatory names they come up with next

I CAN'T STAND THEIR DEAFENING PERSUASIONS, LOUD WAILING MIDDLEBROW/ HIGH THEORY, NEWSPEAK, WILTING SOULS WAITING FOR A RESPONSE, LIKE, RIGHT NOW MOTHERFUCKER?!

"Jadi gimana bro? Sabi lah ya line-up-nya? Yaaa kita sih pengennya kayak job fair lah buat band lokal."

dari basian ke basian

lu lagi, lu lagi

ON HER OWN TERMS

There she stood
with a mop in her hand
an attentive look on her face

The reflection in the mirror
was not hers
but that of a woman painting her lips

A woman knows
that beauty is taught
created, destroyed, reconstructed

And she, more than anyone,
knows that beauty doesn't
exist in the word
        beautiful

But sometimes she forgets
sometimes she doesn't care
most of the time her choices are

Limited by expectations
and there are too many expectations
most of which are hardly ever fair

Eyes still fixed on the reflection
fingers still curled around the mop
she tried to think of an adjective other than
        beautiful

Red is a beautiful color
but it is also
mad
proud
bold

How much beauty does a red lipstick promise?
How often does it disappoint?

A smile with any other name
would look as sweet

Sealed lips
red or not
would still create
silence

And silence can be
both beautiful and
frightening

And it can conceal
as much as it reveals
like the silence that lingers

Between women
who know nothing about each
other
Other
than the fact that

They are women.

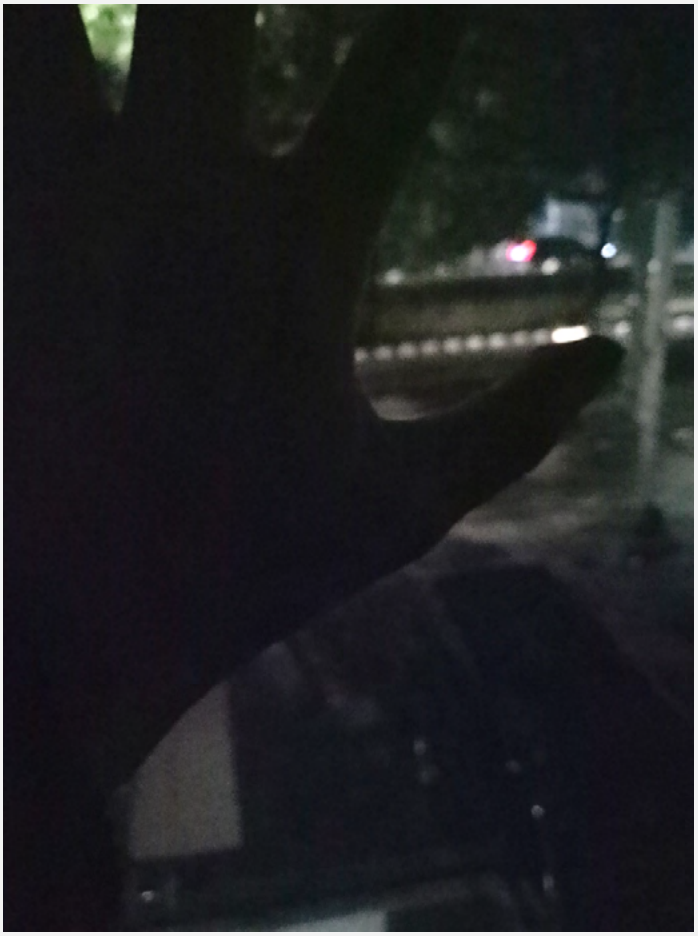
Which is all they need to know
to hear what isn't being said
to understand what isn't being said

A mop, a lipstick,
one expectation after another
simple tools, hard consequences

Expectation
Oppression
Expectation
Oppression

She stood there and she knew
she pressed her lips together and she knew
those two words are more or less the same

For women
who want to be women
on their own terms.



I HAD A DOOR

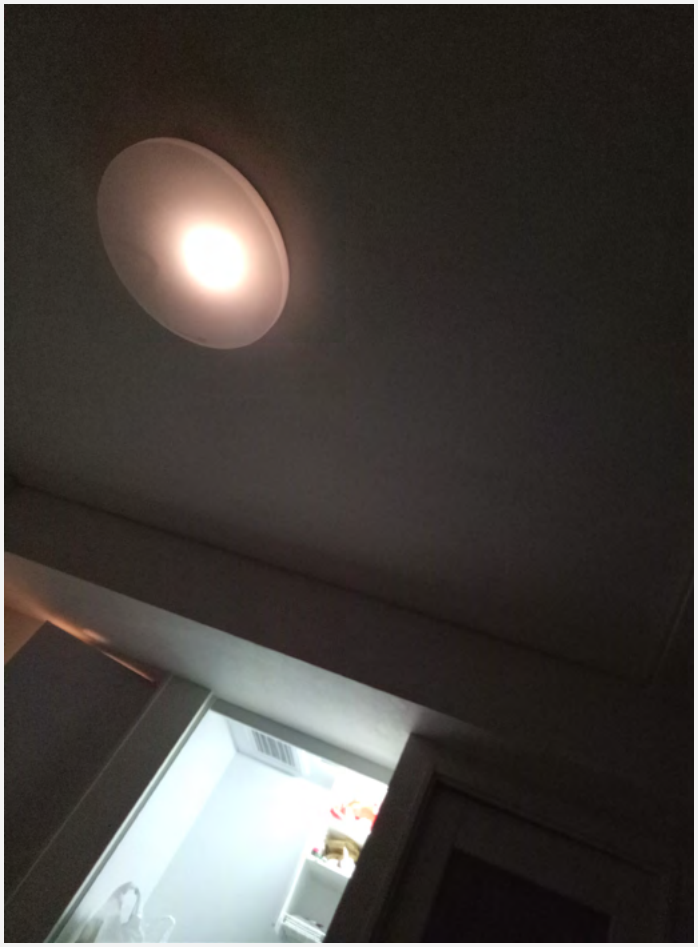
The door that has been infested with termites
has finally broken down. It has not been
one year but apparently it is made out of
hopes and dreams instead of concrete
materials such as bricks and semen which
are more grounded in nature.

Passersby who drop by to visit would declare
how cold it is to live without a door
especially in the rainy season but eh
it never protected me from the chilling
breeze from the nearby beach anyway;
not unless I cling onto its bronze handles.

For the amount of comfort it provided me
I would sometimes knock on it as a
sign of dissatisfaction but it does not
have a phone to tell me that some
people from the city would steal its
warmth before I have the chance to.

In a way I am grateful to be conditioned
as someone who can stand the cold (which
those city folks could never fathom as they
can easily purchase heat packs from their
neighbourhood's massage parlour.) at least
I have no fear of dying to suspended animation.

As it was made out of metaphysical materials
the door left no carcass for me to bury
or cremate. It merely left a gaping hole
in the front porch which exposed me to
the warm sunlight. Maybe next time I
will make the door myself instead of
relying on the help of a digital carpenter.



FOR LOVERS

what stems shallower than
my regrets is less shallow
than what permeates from
this bountiful scene

so to this page deeper than
any books I surrender; for
affection is as subjective as
lovers connecting on the shore

and this feeling runs deeper than
a grudge which is much deeper
than what is absorbed from
Light in this solitude

from this book shallower than
any pages I escape; for
love is as objective as
aesthetics are for a whore