

## In the Wild // On Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution

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Nnandi Samuel

*In the Wild*

A passive brightness scores its initials on the thatched ceiling,  
as the sun plasticize our shadows on a wall frame.  
the smeared patches of light, whitewashed  
for our voice to regift colors.

& sound is made flesh. & the luster worms into both language  
& leash, unsettling— as the raw weave of leather over our nape.

all noon, with each black minute, our pronouns awash,  
toweled in wild greenery: this bestiality of crying wolf.  
the cherub of man-eaters, equally yoked with a long line of male.

I felt a claw peel me till I bleed,  
& my skin sates its hunger.  
how we identify at lights-out:  
a scar for a scar, in this cutthroat blindness.

say, grief stains the bone.  
say, a neighing hoofs at our doorstep.  
there's just we here, back bent.  
all fur, cold-blooded & groomed to make tent-piece off a haystack.  
there's just this labium, screaming it's own hollowed tongue.

*(II) The Last Filly*

On grazing, the teff leaves braided back to near-perfection.  
you— arching to light. & I palm you as if nothing, dusting  
the shiny cow piss off your neck. we pedal our feet in  
tandem with the muddy waters,

with the chased spattering of minutes: a burden life affords us  
& the soiled labour of our precious limbs.

in between this wildness, blood strengthens your teeth.

& we munch: carving out glyphs from the roughage,

& making runes off the haylage— strawed to a bunch  
in the early hours of starvation. we buy into the hunger.

when I itch my tit for milk, I arrive at white grace:

something sour as a chorus to leave between the gum.

when the wild was tamed & you went soft,

I never felt to mourn you. never felt the blind onslaught  
heralding our passing away.

your brawn, sheeted beneath the cruel auspice of light.

I sought you everywhere a brightness

shone, memorizing each bend/ each turn/

each approached surface.

## *On Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution*

The backbone attains hierarchy, calls human  
its rarest prototype. flesh raw mold of matter:  
metonym for brawn gone erect—the way we put friction to use.

from the atlas, you map out humanoids godding Asia:  
all muscle swift & limb-light—sky-diving their way into canary objects.  
the backflips, met by a whopping sleight of hand: skilled for this labour.

palm, splayfooted in sheer divinity of talons & claw.  
elbow, in awful exchange with the modicum of breeze.

It's my first time witnessing entellus roam, undomesticated.  
you: akin to howls. our mouth, brutal in this shy minute.

I attest to making a career off Charles Darwin's theory of evolution,  
to the urge of parodying apes—  
the way the textbook tells me anthropoids are  
blessed with noise, as we are with silence

—the way I kept mute all through the  
knowledge of knowing you ran a grocery store,  
adjacent to a wildlife department I shuttled on goat-skinned sneakers.

as you crush the boiled persimmon,  
while I hang around, aimless—as a fruit cajoling the arm.

nature disciplines me into the longitude of a hand—outstretched, knifing the heat.  
thick yellowish resin, ringing the purlicue of sworded thumb.

Human: the four-limbed aggressor of the food chain.

Being: the state of existence—a call to space, the way an orangutan seeks a tree.

my animal instinct piques at what becomes of us,  
in this endless pilgrimage into the oddities of life—as night blurs into day.

you, lacing & relacing your heartbeat.

the pheromones we secrete, orbiting our loins,

by which I mean my instinct don't lie when I say 'hunger is a call to both hands.'

I have been meaning to tell you:

I'm desperate for a hug.