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Neophyte

Shannon Jonas

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SHANNON JONAS

Neophyte

--for Matthew Henriksen

Dear Sor Savant,

Once a sparrow fell judged by God for truancy; for truancy of man that He would not pardon for man's looks or kisses alone--

I see a hawk has a sparrow rent wide & bad bad fan on the horizon down in ol' Virginny
I walk no other way than downwind so the bad ones can't find me

*O to be home again. SKOAL! Yr Turble Brother "Ghost Ship"
P.S. Will you be at the reunion in September? Please write me back.*

I watch people talk to people watching people how do people talk look at how mouths move
How does my mouth move does it move at all when I lie w/o wife or dog in front of the stove

*P.S.S. Don't be mad but I left the hatchet out and someone ran off w/it.
Probbly the boiler man w/two left feet and a dead bride. Hell--keep it.*

Not many people understand me when I talk b/c I mumble so much
& get made fun of always have I don't mind anymore but know that & such & such

*I always wanted to be around baseball parks. I never wanted to leave town but I had to.
When dogs bark when I can't see them I wonder what at. Look how quick hills fall down.*

You & I down in ol' Virginny Christ why can't time stop not go back because that won't
Happen but just stop you know how things change when you close your eyes so don't

*When I can't sleep I close my eyes and think about a flagpole in the middle of a field
& the sound it makes when the wind clinks the chain against the pole. There it goes.*

I see I never learned to dress myself only how to look in the mirror are we taught that
The saddest songs don't have words I don't have words to tell how I am or am not

*There was a circuit rider who asked "why starve yourself of light. It's all around." Alright
I said, so to Hell I'll go, even if my brother won't be there with me. But you will, right?*

There are shapes there are contoured abstractions there is shape to the world
There's always a way out there's daily breads & births hands to grasp the void

*No unavoidable surgeries I say. Where did I hear that somewhere? It's funny how the way
people just one day are sick they are told, and prepare to die. One by one it happens it does.*

Where is home to you where does yr blood hail from somehow every life is valid & sure
Where is it I go to to feel home I can't say I can't tell sometimes home seems like a door

*You suffer of rare pride brother. I finished this letter before I started it. The bluebird told me. I work hard to be an
honest so and so. Gawd is it easy to lie like Gawd don't want none of me*

India India India where is home to you do you understand what I say when I speak
No one sings songs but say they do I would rather not talk I guess than not eat for a week

*I'd be homeless without a wife. I'd inhabit a hive of snow before I thought I was alive.
Beds & churches are hard to warm inside of. If wakefulness were prayer I'd live forever.*

Night drags its empty buckets against the trails with wrists smooth as well water
But this is not a dream--a somnambulist walking on stilts across the marsh to a muck-island

*Sor, this letter is not a letter--like a baseball hat I swear yr soul's on me like a brand. You know what I'd die for--the
premise for yr embrace. The field. This empty house. That word.*

Do you think I'm here I think I'm here when the clock inside my head winds out
Like a light that goes out in the basement that you don't want to change b/c it's night

*Sor, to bottle moths--& a lantern between his teeth, sor, is the insomniac's only tackle,
the dipsomaniac that changed the world. Remember the name--father, son, & holy ghost.*