

Tottel's #7

December, 1971

Edited by Ron Silliman

THE ANGEL POEM

1

the pin
threaded works a coat
prayer
to every need

the alcoholic Negro
surrounded by his daughters
in the street below

cries out, tries not, in his
drunkenness, to hurt them, cries
as his fists blunder

little arms
push up, out
from her narrow shoulders &
nightgown

appleskin cheeks
starcold eyes

blanket
a spark
in darkness

2

the tree's hump

birthmark, turned "G",
surname
from "separation" "gypsy" and "song"
limit (Loki tricked
to drink the horn
empty it
that was the ocean

outstretched arms

Venus bone smooth
terror of seed

greenblack vapors
the natal wound

I hold yr breast in a cigarette
watch the ashes curl

to find who I am and forget

as the sun
penetrates my room

3

cigarette squeezed flat
cobra-headed

Mother & Nation
same root

in Hebrew---
made by God

I told Kinsey
no view

my parents' flesh
proved otherwise

old friends ardors
that gather and pass

generation

nutrition

residue I breathe
out to the air plant

scattered
flute tones
from a puck
ered mouth

4

planets
we choose to notice

figure
the blue-black sky

seventeen
years the white
dream shattered

music
the shuttle
from lover to lover

circle
round the moon

the limp
ing man

exposes
the town

and she in angry
cries out

5

intimacy
the letters

of friendship
marketed

the city
gallery

studio walls
lined with records

micro
phones and ampli
fiers

chamber musicians
strive for ancient
harmony

violin
violin
violoncello
viola

6

leaves
animal traces

ground on which
we step

light
as thieves

ocean
relentless waves sirens

bristle of hairs
stomach

cells
selves

swollen mouth
of the Russian River

7

what we devour

biological
justice

our skins carried
for future form

poems / fish

embody
the one
body

messages
messengers

angels

1968-1971

MARCH WINDS

to hold
 is it a small thing
in my hand
 the bird

 of Spring
no robin but a western
 meadowlark

in the clump of grass
 and weeds
 that will become a garden

I burn the trash, the match
 set carefully
 (the pack exploded into flame

 Friday when the poet
 said "Faust" a blistry

"cosmic circuit"
 in black letters on the desk
 a list

of little magazines, fringe
 of new consciousness

 The Modern Utopian
 S.C.R.E.W.
 Speaking of Herbs
 Artery

the space-heater red hands
 glowing on the porch Maria
 inside with The Rainbow

distracted from the virus
 our pills and diet fail to cure

 and what of this
interlude before I read the torn
 packet of poems sent by a girl
from England
 the Scientific American
 and whatever else
keeps me from the bills the tedium

 a kiss on the nose
 Maria off to bed
with her nightly
 "who knows? who knows?
 nobody."

 the dark absolute night
 what do I see there?

the moon blackness

my self staring back
 in the window

I do not fear
 the unknown
unknowing
 but for the shadows
 I name
 captive

to the vanity
 I diffuse
 so many stars
 give audience

books I turn to again
again to read what?

 A Nest of Ninnies
 Technicians of the Sacred
these titles

 or The White Goddess
 Epitaphs of our Times

Gringos and other stories.
outside

 islands of self
challenged

 or at once someone else, object
of my own attentions, beloved

 husband to that love
 another profers

 never to be inside
 more skins than one
 the pupil
 of the third eye
 found wanting

"I want. I want." knowing
 what I need to know

 subject to the unrelenting
surge of one
 self who
 knows.

 who knows?
 nobody.