

Perfect California: A Family Affair

(Performed May 15, 2006 at The St. Marks Poetry Project)

Cast (all characters may be played by any gender)

Elders:

Rational Response: At odds with him/herself

Noetic N. Delirium: The inverse of Rational Response

Youngsters:

Sunlight-at-dusk: Slippery

Molly: Morose

Luminous Cravings: Exuberant

Finger-in-his-ear: Self explanatory

Voice: Heavy and luxurious

Act 1

Stage: Simple, blue, with some puffy white clouds. Optional: an elevated highway in the distance, a small house on a hill, up close.

Voice: (Throughout the play the Voice will introduce characters as they enter.)

Dreams occur predicted,
prettiness and perturbation
equidistant cars on the raised
highway, bay gleaming
in its 10 a.m. spot. No one
argues with...

(the phone rings)

Rational Response:

(to Noetic N. Delirium on the other end of the phone with a voice grave, newly awake, not yet taken by the day, not yet conversant but betraying a sexual urge. Stage lights remain on Rational for now.)

Good morning Princess
I was dreaming, no I was
thinking of ...

Noetic Delirium:

(speaking on other side of stage in the dark.)

I have \$1,200.00 in the bank and my expenses
are about \$1,100.00. But then, of course, there
is the loan-to-be-paid-off. I pretend that I can
pay it off at my convenience. In which case I
am flush with \$100.00 today – dinner. Oh and
they raised the rent nineteen dollars and
forty five cents for bringing the
electricity up to code
after the fire in 6-J.

(Lights go onto Noetic D. She addresses the audience.)

There was screaming and sirens in sleep—
I thought INSURRECTION and SUPPRESSION
and ran to join them but

they were babies
getting burned
by the anger
of the immigrant
manchild who was
in fact individually accounting
for the class clash.

Rational R.

Noetic N. please come close. You are not my
enemiga. Tu eres mi amor a la distancia.

Noetic N Delirium:

He didn't mean it, it was how and where he was
born. She didn't either—who would place themselves
so. It's so hard to predict the disasters we anticipate.
My father grew up, he did, really, poor.
My mother almost died in a war and has
discovered almonds to be good for bliss and
heart. She is beautiful but has abandoned
remorse.

Voice:

Remorse requested!

Act 2

(a darkening room where all the cast has gathered as Group.)

Sunlight-at-dusk:

If you peer at a 42 degree angle,
Your feeling state may change.
The butterflies have arrived.

Noetic N:

I am concerned about the safety of the creatures
in the sea. It has been so long.
What are they saying these days?

Sunlight-at-dusk:

Examine the streak of gray. Listen, I haven't
really got the time. I am about-to-have-the-baby. (Falls back into Group.)

Noetic N:

(hysterical)

Wait! What about the
CREATURES?

(A crash, a dong, and an eerie silence.)

Group:

What happened?

Rational R:

Someone died.

Group:

A friend?

RR:

No, a friend of a friend.

Group:

Violently? Internally?

Noetic N:

You may not want to know.
It is the repetition that ends all others.
There is nothing to say about it.
Yet we speak of it without address
without saying a single thing.

Rational R:

It is boring.

Noetic N:

Is it boring?

Group:
Who died?

Rational R:
The immigrant.

Group:
A member?

Noetic N:
A moment.

Group:
Who died?

Noetic N:
There are several.
The question is
inexact. Sacrifice
cohesion.

Voice:
The opportunity
for insurrection
has been temporarily
derailed.

Rational R:
But who died?

Voice:
Remorse Requested!

Act 3
(around a table)

Noetic N:
(under Rational R.—in some manner)
I am talking to myself
but not saying anything.

This life is make believe.
This girlie-boy
is on top of me
making sense
squandering the
position.

Molly:
Adjustable disdain and reconsideration
I thought you were a friend.

Noetic N:
Yes, I have never wanted to kiss you.
Your body hangs from the air
Heart heavy puppet
antipathetic pants sag
from your ambivalent
ass-hips.

(Enter from the right Luminous Cravings wearing a purple or red or fur cape)

Luminous Cravings:
I am seeking
transitional spaces
a phone booth
will do.

Do you all want me?
Incredible, I love you all!
Ultimate and indefinable
Image I lay out
Bungee cords around your
gentle lady waists
Trampoline web to break
your trusting falls.

Rational R:
Another cup of coffee please
Cream and no sugar, not too
light. Well, light but not too
much, not too light, I mean
to say...am I dark?

(to audience)

Pardon me if I go on like this sometimes.
It's harder in dialogue,
everything gets revealed.

Molly:

Who's listening?
You are the one who comes too late.

Sunlight-at-dusk:

Too much information in a face.

Luminous Cravings:

Here it is I have written
my search for you.
Before I knew you and
the thing I told you the first
time we met, that the shore
will meet the disappearing line
and be
the shore.

Molly:

You mean dividing line
I know what you are
It says so here
I am me because you slice me.

Noetic N:

Meaning motherhood or drug induced
euphoria? How do you know so
much from a room or a sun-filled
corridor in a once ancient city or...

Molly:

I will repeat your mistake.
Do you know who the father is?
How could you display yourself
so indulgently. Please, cover
up you part.

(Enter, buff figure)

Finger-in-his-ear:

Who loves you pretty baby?
Whose gonna get you through the night?

Rational R:

Explain morality
in home away from home or

elevating trashy mothers
I don't remember who the father...

Noetic N:

Am I the father?

Finger-in-his-ear:

Your are my sunshine
You are the apple of my eye
That's why I'll always be around you...

Molly:

Another lost opportunity.
You sure it isn't...
him?
(points a finger at Finger)

Noetic:

Can't be, unless...

Luminous Cravings:

Artificial Intelligence
Finger babies in your ear
You never heard from him and
You never heard.

Molly:

Go to hell.

Luminous Cravings:

Close the door gently please

Rational R:

Come on, it is ridiculous
to go it alone.

(Sudden flood of light)

Group:

Who died?

Molly:

A friend.

Voice:

Remorse requested!

Group:

Remorse requested!