

rihanna, unapologetic, track two

by Nicole Pisani



"Broadway" by Olga Nenazhivina

so much depends upon
the rhinestones doja wore to the met —
forgive me for I've erred, lucifer.
it was schiaparelli, they were crystals,
and I forgot to hobnob with trust fund babies
labelling their forks as they frown at have-not children
whose mothers taught them to eat with their hands,
lick the plate clean of crumbs —

how much money would it take for a skull to collapse
in on itself like the bedazzled turtle
and oceangate's stocks, anyway?
I'm asking, luce, because I just can't seem to wrap *my* head
around what it'd be like to scream
twenty thousand leagues under the sea.
I'd be a blip, no one would hear
a gadfly crawl in their ear —

they're wearing headphones
and it was a tortoise.
say, goatman steve, when *will* our ears start to ache?
when will we feel those ten thousand red hands bleeding through cave walls?
when will my pencil run out of eraser to chew up
and fancy unmanned plexiglass sliding doors stop opening for me
as they have for misnamed syrian sprogs drowned on pacifier plastic beaches
stranded —

I bought a birthday card for my brother,
debated which one to get:
beer puns or profit poetry?
it sits now, blank, behind a wall of unread books
on my sacrosanct penless desk
where I loathe to write ?
should I put a comma there
or a smudge —

I can't, this is a touchscreen
and I've lost touch.
his birthday was a month ago.

maybe I should put a jewel
what's the shortcut for that
emojipedia! (they don't have a ruby)
cut and paste like the british museum (they do, lots)
blood diamond wealth accumulation — or perhaps not:
bright red, glistening
I worship you as you slip from my crippled palms and seven severed fingers
ringed with the tourniquets they didn't get in sierra leone —
excuse me? no, I'm sorry ?abibi I can't lax your genocide
I've got to donate to my ghost pumpkin frappuccino fund ?
but how can I?
when I'd rather you steal this book off TOR
though please don't one-up it on c.ai.ver.7.4
that one doesn't quite sit right.
although, I'm missing the human myself —
I haven't met enough people to make them
so it seems I have a mouth, and I must not scream
lest I scream in another's tongue
and fill every spit-soaked pore with a shred of a self
that is the sum of its parts even if some parts were misassigned at birth —
but that's al(?t?)right!
here we have progressive laws,
less progressive fathers,
and mothers who cry over their daughters' silk-soft brown hair
death-spun, boiled in vats of holy water
shrivelled worm lay dying within.
well, blast it across the church's pews and/or hirschfeld's grave
but papa please don't make me preach
because I have no right to mouth along to nina when "I" say
I don't belong here, I don't belong there
I've even stopped believing in prayer.
maybe I'll travel to that unreal city
where matty's god-shaped hole got infected,
chuck a white lighter in my pocket,
and find my own personal rapture at twenty-seven

second coming be damned — *this* is my god:
gnawed bits of rubber like pauper breadcrumbs
dissolved in stomach acid and overpriced caramel-sweet caffeinated drinks
that would make a roman cry tears of greek fire.

bloodhound sniff-gambling on fugazis,
I chew on knockoff tiffany diamonds
revered piss-coloured little things —
but if I could *just* find a pen
(damn, would it feel good to dust that bad boy off)
trench a line on this near-pebble
break it open, see if it's jadeite,
fumble the ballpoint between yellowed teeth
as I scratch around these three final finger soldiers
middle pointer and thumb cocked gun.
etch it onto a cave somewhere below patagonia
fact-guessing: whatever the hell happened to the enveiled women in iran?