



THE

KATECHON

MICHAEL CROSS

“According to the mouth, which utters anything..”

for Leslie Scalapino

THE

KATECHON

LINES 1-500

As he lay wind into knots, the lord rade and the foul 1
set joint to puffing joint in its mouth; rugged at
meats, huckled bones—canaille fucked too its licking
blood, likely cleaved a face from outbreath—sprays
blood on my blood, tells well that, by winning, legs 5
shewed as catch can, wrought-over, face-folds elbowing
out, kneaded from the bone *like a trapeze apparatus*
upon which the flesh is the acrobat—save holes to see,
feet to tongue—put tongue to take of the dust of women
what's dug free by a pate of speech, so its violence, 10

*cum-, qua-*cruelty—the trick of speech: that breath comes 11
fluttering out when the tongue sweeps, fluttering
this tail of paper through a dray beast’s yawn—
blinders drained, stockplant carcass like the drugged
shoat’s worship they’ve so forgotten they’re human 15
it’s impossible to seine the body if everything’s so
summarily cut away. I am moved by others to wound
myself; I am worthless, slit him laving worth,
quarantined from law; I wear my brother’s fat; I am
his face; I am wounded here so that by an animal’s teeth 20

I am an instrument of peace—for taskers no nous 21
won't needs ginger, coal-faced shoving ringlets down
an ovoid head, held flexible grabs stripped to the bole's
stark spars. No *political* nous, no hole in the paunch—
wheat/chaff, sap/brio, cheek/jowl—it won't clewed 25
to the gantry's low combing, its pillowed arms shaking
this shit, stripping the boles to spars, slotted angles
in a smoke pall w/ sheets of transparent telex round
the base of the chest so, even if you recognize the first
laced hole, you are with stain, without breath, doubled 30

as a butcher knocking knotted seam, a brocade caftan 31
jutting into things like hope disembogued, the mouth's
smallish beads secreting themselves like garbage in a
muslin bag, a bouquet garnie but a daub to tear at
at first nothing, then nothing prised out: kids stuffing 35
themselves in moist burrows, forbidden to lick
their fingers, even scrapping for a bite of the carcass
and those who once in place won't show still the past,
my kin, thrusting out her bones in every moment
of herself, even if such creatures feel with puckered 40

eyes a circle-steps-blooded, wants made me die off-land 41
saying, now *here, here's* flesh the day shapes, schemes
the mouth rejects and with it moue tapping crown—
lip-wove moonlight through the wounds we abandoned,
dragging tongue meat through their eyes (their wounds) 45
like bees routing rabbits full of crystal teeth: this is an
allegory of a mouth's mouth, not wisdom or an apronful
of ground bore—an allegory I will remember this night
of, and remembering it, other nights so the shrine
of my father's ash can be real with the world in it. 50

Taskers violine, otiose lips spitting into peace with 51
the sweat of another's face and then spitting peace itself
into sweat—a pledge in the brazier despite weeping
dry tears from this mantle of life like death, balks
tendered between where I fashion love to bear both 55
life and death, where we feed engrossers who eat men—
we feed, determining belligerence by placing a hand
in the brazier, splitting the wrist, hanging wolves on
the fence as a warning to other wolves that I can't be
left with nothing—I can't be left with nothing if 60

it's nothing I rejected and now everything's on the inside 61
of the nothing and still we plan to extradite the taskers
so a body barely stands a chance; balls, throat wet
with cruor, silk wet, tonsured, swallowing strips tanned
with clewing filled the stomach with shells, honeycomb, 65
and ghee—honey with which to masticate, they darkly
grouse, why the calf won't take the maggot when it ripens,
the requisite sole organ of once live things, longer than
friendship, really, *frater-*, *mater-*friends: those loved
and worried for themselves w/o consanguinity or 70

confidence, made trial of weathered skin, the death 71
of which names Albus or Ater: the state and Ater,
what matter who's speaking till you've hooded muscle
in clusters of light, transcribing face-giving acts where
face ends in matte rondure, bends back toward itself 75
and purlieus less brio despite our convenance: made a
sump with these two hands, this false heart, and placed
it against the hole of your real heart and kissed with
the seams and leathers of your whole face this receptacle
of speech I can *hear* in my mouth: well of insudate sounds 80

violably hewn—product of a bore heart, say, that you 81
opened my chest [my face] and the light glist from
the pores where the pearls (*on ton gan*) wax and breed,
where the light fluors through whole—the nonreturnables’
scored-conch-coronal; returners’ pearl on the bone 85
by which came this letter on the skull because I’ve thought
this sound so much—really everyday—that the tongue
literally pearls from bone, ribs blossoming light, bearing
fruit in the shadow of the light, beaming through its cage
and out past spatial enclosures of law (*pardes*) just to see 90

my collop formed by men's bodies what's in its own 91
bound cutis mores of milk and cum dressed in life—
not death for souls to be drunk on labor, it's delight
to see what if a common mess and therefore made wet
by rashers common; that's how they got in your mouth, 95
lost traction for sweat at the other's wrist in a ring of cock
while the land mouthed the language of enclosure
(*nomos, pardes, mannring*) and yellowed where the bodies
fell in fat, stained achilles to knee in red ash and honey
from the siphonet; young smothered in shadden 100

and stoned wicker, sucking the dried sweets from around 101
them, walking from around them, removing the stomach
and pouring honey into gourds—we come at this huge
and terrible earth one serpent inside another at a time,
fucked too an encircling ring of men’s bodies, hand 105
to wrist, because every *nomos* consists of what’s within
its bounds, overawing what Camille calls “the buck
and bite of auditory trace”: we’re so stacked against
our selves from the outset, we who benefit from
the recrudescence of franchise despite black earth, 110

infixd mortgage-pillars, pilferage rote to loose debt 111
and its deluge-hero neither bows nor baskets: these cells
are pored-mouth, pore-mudded, honeyed-ash and dross,
schade and seisachtheia, marters, matins, bulging
contourless quakes through which the sharpset knows 115
its wide-eyed plates. Marters to heed *true* signs above all
admonished things, left behind the glass of Christian
men, their painted hands inscribing, capturing,
numbering, grace-distributing proof—fattened eyes
of the heart, no jot or tittle or prime by reason the world 120

quakes bearing trimmings of vair or grise, bearing 121
the dying in our bodies rather than “in our bodies,”
dying girds the reins lest it cut itself a fractional portion,
a horror’s portion, wasting hearts in the innermost
portion of supernal grace provided with armor 125
and cuirass, or at least I’d like to make feel so—her eyes
distended like wide-open puckering grey-blue mouths,
what fucked things men judge schismatic, the merriment
of which at meat and table, narcosis by the pound
and above all: no war. Above all, none. They piled how 130

they happened to fall and chanced to foam wet 131
with unguent; I fashioned myself and uttered my own
name as a word of power over words (of power)
enfeoffed sometimes do yourself come to do wrong by
the fastenings of composition I am so unhinged to see 135
kneeling and resting, teeming life and teeming
resurrection, an angle typifying love philtres jeweled
in form and polish: my body is a weighted hole to sink
against the heart: a bunch of towels in the house
and this is the cloth I'm fucking with here. May your 140

heart find refuge in the house of hearts against 141
the figures of inactivity—hands painted with the eyes
of antinomy—jaws knitting the destroyer of hearts—
those who plunder by the inundation-of-opening-mouth,
each piece of flesh torn away, made good finally by 145
carving *ungestalt* in the viewer's face—cleansing the eyes
of one's heart from what he stood for was the thing
to be jeweled. What benefits inward construals might
be a singular thing in a sea of paler attributes, may
harm the body outside, name proclaimed, may be found, 150

may be lastingly renewed: fat, fast, forever—how death 151
crests; hist laminar, sure, remediates incognizable, primal
light, cf. sweating plastic sacks of grease grave vestments
of lesser subtlety a vesture of what comes inside throne,
inside throne, inside throne; watch me close up the whole 155
face of the ground with the open side of my body—
this weepy maturing show I know I'd peel flame into
febrile antecedents, how we manifest according to
similitude alone: breath-line according to capacity,
press pearls in thru the open holes in our cheeks. 160

Can't shake the dust off denim—silted lungs—even 161
two-grade-gateways (mercy/grace) cut me back
to the world; come compass me back to this world.
Strung phylacteries planting compliance like tiny stars
poigned once the guys at the taqueria were shot in 165
the chest, plugging compulsory quilting points, arms
wrapped (however unwillingly) around the waist
of resurrection; I bundle fibrous glands from your
midsection, construals, gnostic recidive, these fucking
dogs underfoot around the house or something 170

the surface peels from resurrection—tumid, insolent— 171
“men” is not wolves, man to men arrant, something
sacred: men is man’s wolf or something; availability is
also a kind of work (or something): “social gelatin”
sacrificed as content to survive as form (Beuys?): 175
the rule (software) is sense-less, (the soldier’s body)
sense-less “deodand” (forgetting or inventing sense
brings rules into existence?), desuetude, finally,
to enervate the social gelatin if ox gore be stoned flaccid
on an adjective to live no meat ever came to ‘er arms 180

abandoned by the meat we know: all this panting saying 181
short's the reason for swept-guts in the garbage, that debt
appeared meat, broadcast bodies of debt live again as
meat in awful, animated condescension and to sacrifice
one's rights for said meat, said debt, engage bodies for 185
debt, would even eat it with the teeth (as debt, as meat),
a body both ashen and eaten your body asserts, too,
"I am your body," we ourselves are its food, white-filleted
social, ground pestle sweetly mitigated in the womb,
encomiastic first when we were under law, transire, first 190

into the light to tend sores separately, one bandage 191
at a time, so that the negative ring of the word “shows
messiah” more like badly mauled prey than copy—
you see how many bodies, how many demons and stones
we see through? a man whose fraud of law had sold to 195
those with sums to pay, those who sacrifice their rights
for debt & the mortgage stone that covered her; Bernard
of Clairvaux writes (in his sermons on the nativity): *I am
masticated when I am reproved, I am swallowed when I am
instructed, I undergo decomposition in the stomach when I change* 200

my life, I am digested when I am transformed, I am assimilated 201
when I am conformed—my mouth of itself gathers foam,
hammers “same, same, same,” her eyes prize the fatness
of my throat, milk seeping from the corners of her lips,
her nostrils, fairly pouring forth her throat in propulsive 205
waves against my face. I turn on my knees, arms linked
behind me with *imaginary* comrades, creativity intrinsic
to law like a cloud intrinsic to snow, snow to blood,
which means also to have died *to* law; we think when
we don’t recognize we think, when years are shortened 210

to months, months/weeks, weeks/days, days/hours— 211
when corn will bear a half measure, one thing
a thousand clusters and one heaven-like cluster
of copper—hope that is seen is not hope; laws are simply
clauses backed by threats, rules/guides, we now love 215
wounds and not delight in blood as blood will reach
the chests of horses as it mingles with the sea; its cooling
boiled bones to pieces in its midst; there will be no
moisture on earth that does not delight. Lefebvre sz:
“Integrity can be upheld as a political value only if 220

we reflexively presuppose that our state is a unified 221
community intentionally practicing integrity,” and we
can’t suppose it is—that it will (practice), will will bodies’
horizontal elasticity: their longitudinal slits cut solitary
and aggrieved and pleated; the truth is, I hear through 225
the resonance of the inside of my face, through my teeth,
though I am at once a corruption of all I possess
and the *future* of this corruption as a posited, breathing
“thing”—a “truth” stretching the meat of my life,
stretching to meet real intimacy so the sun might eat 230

(a sacrifice to posit a second more sacred “thing”); 231

Taylor Brady: “How much of this debt-script was I
playing out in which I felt, how I acted and reacted,
in love”—as fire concerts fire, concomitant of the way

I love or delimit love—in what ways do love’s 235

prescriptions finally depend on the sun devouring
the beloved? urged to see by eating, why, you ask, by
blood rather than word? why can’t eat penance? a stole,
the appellation “blood” bestowed on earth in pools

placed “earth” objectively in the mouth; my side opened 240

like a sickled cleft and pressed against the wet earth 241
like a birth canal, like, to perdure if preserved in
monstrances taken by “intromission” like the eyes
of the heart, like, see, he’s no creature spat to suffer
passability, runes on a small twig beneath the tongue 245
to tale the future and plight the troth of love to me;
I wrinkle up my arms, dividing countenance between
the greater (of these I daunt the fierce) while shorter
seeks embrace with men in numbers small enough to
count: the language, the word, the discourse of these 250

sedulous interlocutors the moment they most feign to 251
love in peace among us lop under law retained, under
infancy of law diminished, fasces w/ an ax of imperial
rescript? pieces of sepulture set shew through friendship-
debt? and province by province localized to love those 255
who secure that you suffer what you wish: blush spread
rather than blood shed—not so born to blush for his
begetting, ass-begotten, sort would have brought blush
to your rule this time—to make credit depend on time
elapsed—eyeballs rolling w/ lots shook, let the ranks 260

blush more readily blackened by what it shines for 261
(at least adorned) biform lithe limbs far in the fire—
every disfigurement of the human face is god's image
elapsd (pander rather than panther): fillets and garlands,
harangues and edicts on the eve of installation, anyway, 265
appanages in the grave ain't bare in winter, penal fire
wrecking itself on what a mouth makes judgment
should a man be? Herein is all my soldiership wrecked
against a sucking hole: the only arms I bear will will it
(filling) baskets plait of supple withes, her lappéd folds 270

racked loose warring life by licking my sides into shape— 271
were loose, love, wanting the savage ram butts the wether
pole, yes suckling, w/ an infant mouth, a warranty
of peace from this spot on earth where dicks torque too
tight to crank down—what sort of judgment a man? 275
what pretense should be chew through? what sacred
cakes crumbled for the earth's yawning one day undoing
what's done the next? add viands to and scrape caked
acrylic nubs, makeup abrade, spittle bands dug ope my
lips so such as she loves me, and I chance to meet 280

the unfolding immanence of the world square from 281
the chest, pulling at a lip, tugging eyelids down against
the cheeks, I've soldered my arm to the air, now calcine
then, now gilds them to pass posture, some stretch,
so sleep, some, full-round, twine round doctrine 285
to doctrine and devoured, stone-sober if I wish to study
life with my wottest word, I must have recourse to
number, gesture, affect: the first of which (my enemy)
made funny; used to chew, but kept not wiping his chin
too often what he takes up straight, straight up from 290

“Nature’s force”—too close to the “nature” we’ve been 291
fucked by—more fucked than devious, at least, for each
minute of living for them I’m filled with blush—I want
my whole clean—open to who’s there to be hit *by it*
(the poem): according to Olson, the 20th c. (now 21st) 295
is “inimical to poetry as plotter of force,” for Olson,
an enemy halved by the exactness of love like no man
gracefully looking on while others fuck—rain keeps us
close in the one room (me, K., the dogs, under
comfort)—commitment brings in stake: stake moves 300

to speech: if only she had eyes she'd wish to whet them 301
wet with tears (that wonderful hole of an eye—mine,
clean—like the character for mouth) cut how we all are,
and the labor alone makes us grate against the cyclone
links, lipping the lead and what it makes us, finally, want: 305
too bearing down to be fucked how we might take others
away (that way) slack as though it's not night light shat
out: foaming, foment, freely sees self shit as self (shit)—
shit one's ownmost ontic rhapsode now to sew, some so
lost face *nunc stans* proves mealy-mouthed sound, 310

sound's that tinny wood—poems sourced for and thin 311
word—swears: “I’ve no less face, sympath spit thew you,”
lips coiled tight bows gainst gang’s writ—the corners
of their beautiful mouths whetted red toward beating
to death how we member them being toward living 315
dead—being toward being fully enraptured by death’s
aphoric, neatly egalitarian claim—these living “things”
swallowed as memory’s lasting monstrance mold
calcined bones into malediction, finds death identical
with commune and now likely cairn wiped clean 320

by #4 shot: we are not there already among you nor 321
will we ever surmise our power to act faced by goatsed
blains sagging at the boots on the ground; the difference
is I'm working these folds right here...really going at
the fat: tugging a talker, my courage, through a tun 325
like there's only the back of my head left—which goes
to prove I'm mostly useless in others—I faith despite
“inadequate incarnational resources,” faith gnaw face,
face faith and pride guts to eat good the way I want to
eat: for Kocik, offering the body as food, which is why 330

I ultimately lost so many shots, valuing no biz despite 331
our substantial economic investment—lockups of sound
spat back, “comrades,” let this go, love, my one domestic
compeer, this living thing between us spastic where
the pistil should be how I face against placefulness 335
in hopes of genuine derivation only now engaged
in postponement, the noise of our lips slapping against
facticity cut into shorter and shorter lots & threaded
to be moved, to believe in horizontal organization
rather than this vertical socius or just holding nothing 340

and natch pissing yourself sullen in a tree, but believe, 341
be moved, or say you find yourself better hooked to
loving nothing, thwacked by swelt, your blood, tears,
sweat, etcetera, dripping vitreous humors, my tears
and this retail is precisely what you must love: don't "do" 345
doing nothing; don't even don't do it, but, if you do do it,
this "do" will change in a split to punishment: I mean,
I obviously got pwned—no, no, no, "this guy stuffed
me," I was "hammered" by the limits of my activism,
useless in the face of "our" industry *sans* glass-reinforced 350

concrete, ambulatory devices, ink-jet transfer, etc., 351
the *mise en abyme* of this one wobbly parole balding
and, frankly, “frumpy” though it’s finally our time to eat.
Bios or our at-one-ment makes us, finally, ready-to-hand:
red roseate ropes serves remission, turns love on us pars 355
as forever pars assumed wearying thins to hold debtors
in love is the debt a curate set to be present at my end
remaking. I want open my flesh though I cognize the
light by staring right at the fucking sun and what’s left
toeing nylon and bits of my face in the ground; 360

bends the sun from my face to your mouth and we need 361
volume to make one's pulsing forward in fits where
my face used to touch it: where you have sun in your eyes
now. Now that this trope dictates what your mouth
should do with the jaws of the rule, I will hard links 365
to touch and fill this lucite fosse with real-life things
so hemmed by the pressures of experience—blown so
opposing salvation it just vibrates in place like the object
world could attain some temporary semblance
of cohesion but there's this sun in your eyes now: 370

one man's mean another's poison, etcetera. I guess 371
my power is not solely my "strength" or the distance,
I guess, between the good and the good we do; so what
I need now is just out of reach: barefoot'nd outlying
formal adjudication (menace's this meme's bite 375
(despite clearly discernible teeth)) leaves less prescription
(possession) and more of its bearing (and undoing)
in the condition in which I find myself; in short,
less self-preservation and more of what's living in love
(Butler) resolves myself buoyant to the generic 380

routine violence of the object world: viz. bullshit 381
acrimony of something worn, stained and presenting
among the tripwires and claymores in contrast to
my drooling outward self: it did split my breast, did
run the rhizome, did, through mid-self who empty trunk, 385
my waist, soapy in the basin nor neither smiling side-wet
teeth (slick these oily pools of bile) despite pinching in
the lip's coy pout, fucking sharp—these—and wet:
did it thwap latex, bleach cylinders, gape and spout scald
w/a linen sieve these guys trussed by wrist in rope, 390

knee-flaps fully peppered through mineral fact abrade 391
nascent shapes of possibility (John Chamberlain's cars
as the reification of GDP: *lichten* approximates
condensare, yadda, yadda, yadda) pretty much blunting
any advocacy of conceptualisms at this point—those 395
swigging bowlers at the lithium fount, lousy with
procedural verse while these seven (fathers/sons, both)
are lovingly hogtied and shot in the back of the head.
Choice is pressing. It's not like something's reversible
in its nature, at least publicly, since almost nothing 400

carries the root of its uncertainty in itself (though it 401
most certainly should), but more immediately troubling:
once I'd pulled my hands from the milk to cover my eyes,
rubbing away the sleep, saline and drool, filling the slots
about these dollard's eyes even my best day's leaking 405
from the wish to ring this mess together. The essence
of dogmatism's that everything encountered can be
recognized, including these infinite pouts marking a grim
scent on the neighborhood green. As a result, there's no
moisture left on earth: just folds and folds of industrial 410

derma airbrushed in teals and buttermilk and piled 411
into fleshy pools marking trade checkpoints and fuck
dens: goods put a pressure on the way we mean:
occupies this run for anemic recovery as subject to
the limits of “representational goods”—“our” “world” 415
“images”—jubilee “cleansed” “from” “usury”; I mean,
I ultimately can’t mean for you because my facial parts
won’t move how we settled on joy or that we made
another “we” (gratuitously) or that it was gross to store
our cum even in advance of a brighter day, hopping 420

squarely through the heart of the current to outwit the 421
object of transmission (or simply how we talk about it),
but the movement can't be over since I'm still sounding
out its will, its still moving through my frame though
it's not yet time to eat; not even for pity—pity besides 425
boldly ventured's half wrong against the boundary
teeth form to sound promise or disappointment or
a little expulsion of air; you'll find something right
in a construct better than death every ways—to talk
about the shirr—natch—or, edging up the plait of 430

this-or-that-all-too-human-quag, within or beside 431
the gypsum in my stead, wills shapes while leveling
features up, up, up and out, mugs pressed mug to each
to ease some weirdly wholesome riposte through cracked
and crapping mouth—this, my lasting suite to yield 435
only “cause” so bad; little more than pork or plastics,
finally, sop-thrown futures neither trill nor present nor
wanting too much or too baldly. Also, so the wound
shines out against the hot ken, blunt and through,
lights it, fastidious, out through the heart of the spongy 440

whole: our faces these rich long neon seams and their 441
claims—stuffed full with standing and so standing still
are pretend structured, local reasons ruptured in instance
and not in hold so what’s untrue and in the wrong
because won true and in the right: it’s spit, its pivot, 445
its absolute pique. Thinking’s enmeshed, regionally,
so we can’t need a portrait of American violence to be
a correlate of the real since—like a sacred, dumb
predator—what death is its *saturation*? I *am* this violence:
the ground which arrays me in splendor (limits) 450

and incites me in hold: to hold more firmly held against 451
the rote may make a difference in the futures today,
in death called hooded in night. Among the living,
I exhibit a vital ardor, fortitude, a carnal, supple
mensuration's all that frenzy whichever immanence 455
means from the ground up; a flat, perforated membrane,
out through each quarter of the face: and still you give
us mouth, shit? Pig around the page? What, interloper,
sense-semblance my own and only true conciliatory
gesture which ever pours forth brains; forth my own 460

figmented (human) frothing frame? Or, I, my self true, 461
my realms, my forms true: arranged self for suckling—
move tongue taken to name, finger to weep (doubtingly).
Tongue-taken, brains poor forethought/forthright
(oscillates), finger/wound/weep (doubtingly). The truth 465
is your candor breaks my heart: I lift you to the fence
where you perch like a baby owl against the morning
day, chonis full of piss and worse but still you hang
from an index as we walk across the street. I think
there's no words left between what we've said and what 470

we've been promised (to say) so form rests fetid near 471
the contours of my life—peppers my face; hedging
around (edging?) a phenomenal, empirical self.

Dicks around, now in palm. But foils *aren't* a sheltered
path, the enclosure of which might otherwise seal me 475
from myself or pound salvific the doublet “marrow/
wisdom” tapped out, *left teeth lodged inna bed frame*
(again, again, again) my teeth are in my face again (again).

Does a shield, what righteous import can we mean?
Why the ruffled lilt when what I wants to break a bod 480

in heel's hold? Why won't raw round arable land 481
(balls in hand)? That I approach lacunae from an in-one
rather than whole-moving. "Faced" things and left taking
soma's self-standing doublet (thorax/bud) modal ride-
and-fall, tiny compartments rise and fool. See, they pig 485
about themselves—not "men"—pig doles aidos for this?
Olid round, yecchy rondelle pinched in bond and bound
eyes and appertaining life, the more decisive, the more
dramatically its felt. Echo enclosing and unfreely: bod-
closed risibilities kept semblance by the threat of self- 490

preserving, self-sheltering self; hunch the head does— 491
shitting its bourgeois interior, solely wrist to rales, putsch
to the elbows in, consented for contented to myself
whither from and most or whether spake from the mouth
or more unfit: something by which the mold breaks. 495
I say better death than mess—better mass than brow
lard-hard by which a mold bricks, better bearer wet stock
to the teeth in pone chunks said prevenient grace once
felt supernal pillars, sockets is as bites, its bile one cry
wending rode now on blades, once felt the nesting edge... 500

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