

QUEERS <3 SUFJAN STEVENS

for B. & b. & .

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twice you call the moon
once straddling your lap
looking up at me from the ground

a halo over my head
the other with your head in mine
an angel

you call me and it's hard to imagine
a companion or consolation
just an image suspended

death like that
effortless untethering
by your naming of the thing

thrown up into the sky (fly!)

just a metaphor

and it's not about the wings
lent to me
it's something else

it's not their lightness or darkness
pulled up on the shoulders
like falling from an uneven surface

more human than angel

if anything a bird

some comfort
a bird

sang like this
a bird

i keep finding these nests
from when we pick each other
of feathers

i've built in my sleep
of fabric
memory like how i keep

giving up the full sofa
both curbside disposal
in my very first apartment

for a loveseat
sweet and impractical
in my second

a scrappy green
historic cat scratches
gashes i sewed shut

cushion tufts of gray
yellow eyes
in the living room

just a bit too small
bony shins and thighs
my hands shaking as i paint

perched (how i like it)
coupled in
your nails black

i should mention
six months ago

that this next part was written
when the world was []

that i stuffed it away
but here's the rest of it
for the first time

thought too sentimental
i tell you i don't listen to lyrics
while we are discussing Sufjan Stevens

and you accuse me of not knowing
as soon as you say this
i recall taking

why "Fourth of July" is so sad
i recall death
your hand onto my lap

i play it
listen to each word
the thing is

for the first time in many years
the whole way through
you don't have to memorize

memories
i know this song is about []
i should mention

you just recall them
before we say goodbye
we don't say this next part aloud

(you've told me now that you think grief in poetry is overdone
but i hope you can understand this— i'm making space instead)

sliding closer
feelings with names like ours

distinctly human
and it is like that

that we are suddenly []
woven in our pull towards sad music
Did you like it?

all our lost friends
you point to a book on the table
I knew him.

i touch the back of the loveseat
a wing sometimes
i never tell you this

your shoulder
when you talk
in halos (like *them*)

this is why you watch documentaries
because the connection built
overtakes you

you inform me
via horror and sympathy
and there is a vulnerability so holy

(can you use the word Holy like this?)

i mean i want awfully delicate

i mean i want to share this

i mean i want to bless you

i mean everything in our reach (ghosts)

pulsing in our awkwardly entangled hands
to be devastated
of one another
i'll make one about us

both with a strange desire
the ends of our limbs extremities
and it is this song that makes me think
not like lovers

(or maybe i would like to call us, all of us, that:
like someone makes a friend

if you'd like to.

Lovers. yes. i'll make
can i hold you, like this?)

knee against knee
and it's here where
humorously

like bird's feet
prehistoric
in that second

as i press the sole of my foot against it
of a clear picture

with ankles coned enough to become bird feet
thick enough to sustain ankles but

your chirpish sound
displeased at my pausing of the music
(to hold the moment maybe

as you take the phone from me
returning the motion to press
like the whole damn earth

foot against foot
i begin to imagine one of yours
amongst all the []

clawed
horribly ugly to me at least but
charming

the thought pleasing my lack
of a somehow bird-human

or bird feet
with no other discernable bird features

kissing at my ear
an action i didn't even notice i had made
my image of them hinging on escape)

and hit the next track
your (yes, now very human) feet
against mine.

queer imaginary

i queer my body at the edge of town
stripping on the metro & taking pictures
in the glossy blur of the window

capturing movement & empty
seats in the photos

i crowd myself with image
with looking

on the outside
i am every angle
every color
of the sky

public

in the way that the sky
is public

rearranging myself kissing
the metal poles
swinging
sprawling

across the seats

sometimes with my eyes closed
sometimes with my eyes open

& it feels so good

the metro car pushing
& pushing the world
away

so it cannot catch me
taking myself in

making love *this way*

& it's always about sex
but what about just a body

in its bigness
 in its aliveness
 in its own display

of tether
 -ed to the world
 a grounding

the hands not for touching
 but for feeling holding weight

“the body” not an image
 nor an architecture

a warm capsule
 within & in & in

i'd like to give back to it
 instead of take

but of course

that's making love too
 & i am

right alongside

the deep
 silver whirl of the AC
 its coolness
 the shh shh of the tracks

& i am opening [here] on the inside
 because the camera cannot capture
 this kind of private machine

how it works

it can only capture my shoulders
 how they can shed a coat of baby blue feathers
 & shiny teal fabric so thick

it builds
 a beautiful human-sized nest
 for me to dip down
 & dream in.