

# HELIX

Tim Ramick

So, last night, in the purpling and quickening dark, I dreamt of myself before self, when I hadn't yet been selved into the empirical world, when I existed in a world without me, a consciousness without figure, an equation without context, observing what can't be observed, consumer of the ineffable, the we of the I, all into one, before the eddied egg accepts the

So, last night, in the eclipsing of lunar refraction, I dreamt of myself after self, when I will be unselved by the gust of dispersal and the resultant low doppler aftermath of death, the widest hush, when I will exist in a world without me, the object of self existing solely as the subject of self, the I of the we, one into all, after the weary brain and the wearier heart

So, last night, in the deepest black of lack of light, I dreamt of my oldest self, the moment before the moment of ceasing to be, the grief of loss and the joy of relinquishment and the persistent relief of cessation, falling away from the now into the never, a helpless god about to be shoved into dark, expiration to flame, aspiration to ash, tongue to dust and vision

So, last night, as the stars spun in accordance, I dreamt of my youngest self, the moment after the moment of coming to be, the thrill and sorrow of motion and the stun of undeniable existence, falling out of the always into the now, a helpless god soon to be shoved into light, conception to cradle, loin lust to pacifier, thumb to tongue and eyes tight, language virgin

So, last night, as the sovereign I, as myself amid the spiral of my imaginings, shunted into sleep beyond insomnia, I dreamt of achieving elegant madness, the fashioned structures of a language architect, simultaneous and specific in pattern and discernment, the effort of untold story as the fullness of sun and sunlessness, frontiers of inner and

So, last night, as constellations fled from lamplight, I dreamt of my older self, when I will be content, or if not content, satisfied, waning in the wisdom of the beneficent corral, at rest in the fold without beast, thunder fooled by fate, having dodged regret, the maturity of self adhering to yesterday, past erecting to the feminine wish, out of the gully for

So, last night, under a moon of cosmic cheese, I dreamt of my younger self, when I was happy, or if not happy, enthused, waxing in the earnestness of the open range, at play in the fields without beast, lightning proofed by fate, having plowed want, the youth of self untethered to tomorrow, not yet erect to the feminine will, not yet spilled into the

So, last night, within ambient washes of suburban indifference, I dreamt of myself as young, when I embraced hopes of understanding my place in the world and when those hopes slipped from my grasp, their weight proportionate to their worth, the rising bile and the waking squint, the blood gorged antenna and the fragile circuitry, my youth sprung from

So, last night, under star fall and twinkling ambition, I dreamt of myself as old, when I'll relinquish expectations of ever understanding my place in the world and when I'll toss those expectations as confetti, their weight proportionate to their worth, the watering down and the dying wit, the shrinking horn and the violent plenty, my experience strung

accept their deliverance, the worm  
jawed to brevity, the lemming self to  
the broken sea, I am the only master  
worth his salt, vibration of the knell  
and memory of the pulse lost to the  
external deep, the internal depths  
gone to seed, to be no more isn't the  
same as to never have been, when one  
is no more one might as well have  
never been, I've always been and will

vanished, language amateur to the  
grave, bloodflow stale and pulsed to  
stop, I in my corner throw in the  
towel for the beautiful bout, I'll fall to  
the canvas in my bed at home, loved  
ones silent in the stark relief,  
bittersweet to watch my sail dip below  
the horizon, I'm neither boxer nor  
sailor nor god, I'm an old man at the  
precipice, I'll be an old man promised

good, ever moist with woman's spray  
and the sisyphus joke, the wasted  
effort of demand to supply, I'll have  
melded with those made beyond  
originality, the sweat of the common,  
the knees of the safe, I'll have done  
the work or I won't have done the  
work, I'll have loved and spun tellings  
and tried my best to pay attention,  
struggling to stay clear of brutal

swimming messenger, the worm  
coded with fatality, the salmon self to  
the origin pool, I am the only god  
worth mentioning, the prime domino  
willing to fall, wind to the wind and  
the idea in the gleam, to become  
wasn't optional, to never have been  
wasn't available, to have never lived  
upon this planet is no longer possible,  
no one ever wasn't and no one ceases

outer memory, grammatology as  
substitute for wilderness flow, the pre  
and the six and the post around the  
rod through the heart, this  
combinatorial agenda of helix  
imagination, I speak of a now without  
expanse, my every early effort and my  
final terrible tide soon forgotten,  
having oceaned words toward their  
farthest shores, having crafted balsa

with tinsel, my hopes shrouded in  
gauze, I am now old to myself as  
young, the midpoint washed under  
the bridge, potential soon to be  
richtered down to the tremor of my  
hands, I'll persist in negligent poverty,  
I'll work unto death for someone else  
by day and unto death for myself at  
night, for my wife and son all day and  
for my wife and son through the

in the womb, bloodstream fresh and  
corded swift, fragility beyond  
expression, I am all of a sudden and I  
will breathe the breath of trees while  
loved ones await my eyes and steps  
and words, I've become out of the  
having been, my sail rising out of the  
horizon as I billow toward shore, I'm  
conceived but I'm not born, fetus at  
the threshold, an individual promised

2

gulch, a boy of scraped knees and  
freckled ears, sour breath and  
roughhouse play, I mold to the  
makers beyond consideration, lovers  
lurking in the land of ponytails and  
breasts, wallflowers and vamps, the  
others and the one, if one there be, if  
any there be, boy stays boy as long as  
he can, as long as I could, wary of the  
blood and the clench, the smoother

ornament, boyhood of wet dreams  
into manhood of fathering, the  
intellectual burst into the fray, I stood  
atop the empty hill, foolish and  
windswept, thinking I could matter,  
wishing I might mean, the hill  
tumbling pebble by pebble into the  
civil swill, words blurred into  
structures, ideas rubbed from the  
soul, the finer dust of communal

death, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of mortality, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the oldest self would prove the only self of consequence to itself, memory drilling into the moment, the imminent absence of margins, all notation spilled toward the edges, all marks bled into expansive pools, lungs going flat, heart going flatline,

injury, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of longevity, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the older self will suffer in the margins of satisfaction, the swift souring of the body, the reprocessing mind, self love to self loathing to self litigation, the pardon as marrow in memory, the I chained to the we of its youth as the hammerers of roadside

night, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of fidelity, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the old self of current eminence needs sheltering from its earlier selves, the slanderous brats, spoiled by their safe survival, the should haves on the shelf, the could haves in the closet, the never dids sewn into the mattress, the swollen

always be, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of immortality, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the world after self would remember me for less than my span, for some devoted shufflings of words and poundings of the heart, or not at all, or not for long, progeny and passersby, the dwindled self to the run-of-the-mill forgotten, neither the

texts, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of creativity, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if I ought to bleed myself into my loving cup, to the brim and into the land, to soak my nation, my nation of one or of multitudes, of nine or of none, blood created as fluid yet spilled as idea, I give my plasma to the next bend, to the next cornerstone,

need, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of autonomy, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the young self would regret its clumsiness, its reticence and strobed chagrin, the borrowed stance, the bungled faith, the coy pursuant failure creeping up the spine as time speeds into denial and day-to-day, the damaging logistics, the malevolent

to be, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of eternity, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the world before self held mystery from without and the world of self only from within, not as experienced memory but as projected experience, one's existence as surprise, the big boo, the grand imaginative leap from one's hiding place into the spotlight

life, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of temporality, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the youngest self embraced itself as none of the subsequent selves could, the gathering of memories as the capture of wonder, the clutching of innocence so the I could survive, to awake out of wakefulness, to become out of

flanks, and in the dreaming I imagined myself worthy, the merit of corporeality, and in that imagined sleep I felt as if the younger self witnessed itself as future betrayer, as untrustable body housing a loose cannon, able to blow life up a tunnel, able to spill seed into earth, not the happy-go-lucky bedmate with sharp elbows and kicking legs, not the

rocks, the failed scouring of conscience, the escape into the woods, I'll weed and I'll control burn and I'll clearcut to ground level, my soil flood-borne to the sea upon the tears of a considerate thinker, the romantic mind of a controller free of the story compunction, allowed to mosaic perception into confession, to unfold his tinkered musings as a

piggybank and the cookie jar of crumbs and the pile of bones outside the candystore, I'll risk sanity in the swirling cant and argot of my ink's tongue, I'll poke under the epidermis with stains of fierce endeavor, refracting spectrums of private praise and invective, I'll permanent the transient, days gone by spoken on my behalf, days to come whispered in my

isolation, the magnitude of the smallest commitment, I crumple under the easiest thoughts, I rise to meet the obfuscated, I incline toward private expression sent into the world with a sack on a stick to wander through possibility, I'll grab everything from periphery to focus, rods and cones collide and align, the absorption of absolute array, the

brain going flatland to the coast, spirit into the surf, soul toward the vanishing point, we reside in the empirical past and we resist the transcendent future, hypothetical certainty, I'll soon succumb to breathlessness, she'll kick the bucket across the yard, he'll buy the farm with empty bottles, all of us receptive to living static, everyone along for the

the next cut child, the marrow of observation and not of remembrance, stanch the wound and forget the blade, mineral language into the water table, clausal clumps into sediment, I'll range some future fabrication to differentiate the wheels of self, vehicles of comprehension carrying my recollection across fences, imagined twists and turns in their

4 boyish grin sustained, the testicaled lad without concept of siring, I'd as soon touch any her as if she were me, but before girls I'll leap creeks and scale backyard escarpments and dirty my perfect shell, suited for scruff and tussle, carnal knowledge left to loiter on the porch, death banished to the basement, poverty and cruelty only in newspapers, I romped the brighter

wheelhouse hymn of a sleeping captain whose tugboat nears a maelstrom, nor the perpetual swoon of a hooded girl in harvested farmland, nor the floundering of a doldrummed will now silenced, only an ordinary death with commonplace disposal, ash in the gulfstream lifted across rooftop and wasteland, I'll persist as the phantom of an idea, the

of self-reflection, self-examination, self-inquisition, and time begins before it is begun and my beginning began before I did, I revolve away from and toward my resolution, I acknowledge my limited and limitless expansions and contractions toward expected and surprising epiphanies, I'll transparent the solid, days to come shouted from treetops, days gone by

coming, the ineffable ovulation ambushed on its way to the sewer, I am for reasons beyond my sphere of influence, or so I assume, not sitting in some sauna of comprehension, all iterations of the verb-to-be illusory, all tenses unwitting tropes, I'll clamber into the world as yowl and slip out of it as silence, the greatest gift of life and the greater gift of

sleep, I hope to be absolved, I hope I won't be faithless, nor cynical beyond compassion, to forgive my youth for its waste and my golden days for their denial, to bolster my other with renewable love and encourage our son with indomitable respect, to cut self sufficient slack without becoming lax, to insist upon self-improvement without retribution, to be self deemed

tautological package, I want to come clean, to display every stage of every self as chart upon my door, with index and key to orient those of convention, with disappearing ink to challenge those of intuition, with labels removed for all lillies of the field, I scrawl to gain vantage and I squint into the fog hoping to steer away from the pit and I'll tumble into

slopes, I strive to be honest, the honesty of a child secure in the actual, engaged in delivering self through action and not idea, the truth of the observable and not the fallacy of conjecture, what is there to be testimony and not what could be conjured as fiction, the tangled musings of melancholy, the raveled dreams of fantasia, the shreds of

whirling dervish, I wish to tell the truth, to authenticate what I witness, but as I dwindle in body I will smokescreen my mind to believe itself progressive and not as arthritic as my hands, able to distinguish brilliance from sham, able to grasp aesthetic nuance within the moral roar, to tell the difference between philosophical folderol and personal truth, the

imagined lands, I give of myself as scribe to those unsurfaced, I female the male and I other the one, I cardinal and multiply and crossroad, I frame what is absent, crawling toward depth of field and internal consistency, texture as language, language as prayer, prayer as the terrain and relief of rational living, of irrational dreaming, of intuitive

death, I'm primed to spill my guts, to diagram the human condition with my entrails, but just now I'm in my mother's waters, her heartbeat my aural sun, my father's surge pulsed in my circulation, my new limbs unresponsive to my intuitive awareness of them, my dreams already those of an infant voyeur, a phantom prodigy, I can't swim forever although

ride, I'd like to bare my soul, to tell of my fears and loves with equal vigor, if not in my spinnings and scribblings then on my deathbed, clarity through the blur and wheeze, genuine affection for those I'm leaving behind, for the dimensions of the room and the final air in my lungs, for the selves I discard and the body I abandon, if only I could articulate perception

creator of self, I stalk vindication, before the last vibration of the last tolling, knowing as I render these words I'm already forgotten even if they aren't, even if they persevere in some dark cupboard of some slumping structure, the aftermath of self is an unstable alloy of vagary and supposition, the parade of progeny or the archiving of effort or splendid

muted underground, I pursue redemption, the excuse for my existence in this range of likelihoods, to go from a world without me to a world of me, the transference of fated energy into a passing self, I'm grateful for the privilege, I'm glad of the glimpse back beyond my birth to proposals, to unplanned minglings and predestined purpose, the

obscurity regardless, self fallen into falling, I've dreamt the distance, I'm guilty of loitering in pornographic cul-de-sacs, this nation's heartland, as developing self I move toward cores, all we know congealed into seed, all my seed to the one love and the ocean, all my love to the towheaded girl become brunette woman, mother of my diminutive self become

faithful imaginings, the sweat of sugar and salt, the water rinse, one drying in self's own light, I've dreamt the fire, I'm guilty of lavishing myself with guilt, this nation's hairshirt, as carefree self I never scratched my conscience and now I've shredded my id, torn the fervent scribble into edible scraps, all coated with meringue, all loathed into waste and

I'm forever swimming, I'll tread water till I'm god, I've dreamt the span, I'm guilty of lessening the divine, this nation's creed, as newborn absolute I protect the slate, I chalk the earnest heart, the scrawl of one's very own religious truth, spiritual selection, all organized as disappearing act, bunny on the tongue, pills swallowed to vent the pipes, all cleared to sound the

worthwhile by self and improving, ever better shy of best, I've dreamt the measure, I'm guilty of languishing on righteous shores, this nation's perimeter, as mature self I drift toward edges, the allure of cliffside vertigo, the push toward seasoned balance, all my focus upon vertical sustenance, the beam sustaining my tilt, all my leanings held true, this

imaginings, we have imaginary infinity, eternal creating, cyclical mercy, I've dreamt the form, I'm guilty of lamenting chaos, this nation's simplicity, as spun wordsmith I'll never be liquid, never testify to mercurial grace, the deepest depths stay inaccessible, I'm whipped, all honeyed into spread, all my sap too thick to flow, too slow to the oval

certainty of self, the uncertainties of self, I've dreamt the sham, I'm guilty of lampooning my reflection, this nation's looking-glass, as unborn possibility I refract a deathless god, the destiny of every urge, life delivered as idea and ideas generative as temporary flesh, all modeled after themselves, illusions cloned, sinew strung as garlands, all shiny in the

stylings of one's mind and the imprint of one's soul, what people deem talent or genius is knack, I've dreamt the craft, I'm guilty of lingering between recognizable sheets, this nation's lodging, as vintage self I nod to comfort, I refute the god who favors those who suffer most, all my pain in a seamster's thimble, all my patches stitched with morphine luck, ironed

6

with the accuracy of omniscience, the whole truth and the whole lie, everything and its contradiction, I've dreamt the flux, I'm guilty of lusting after paradox over purity, this nation's puzzle, as penultimate self I'll never know next, the final cast of the only shadow, all dark in the day and overglared at night, the negative of soul gone dreamless, the twitch of

oblivion, the recollection of nothing, I've dreamt the void, I'm guilty of looting bare cupboards, that nation's larder, as long dead self I'll reject the absent solution, the water's clarity negates its existence as visual proof, all purity as victim of itself, essence as exposure and exposure as erasure, the true oblivion of created choice, the great unbecoming, the greatest

discretion, I want to depth-of-field the self, all the swirling flakes of ego, the near and the far and the inbetween, layers of impurity, the authentic hypertext, geometrical gods with links to the forgotten, snow accumulation atop my history, once upon a time there was happily ever after, my desired history, I wish to be fabled as now I swirl toward

pleasure release, I want to orgasm the self into submission, exhaustion beyond arrogance, hyperbolic thrills, the spirit sweats, the tingle floods the toes and all follicles glow, shudder spent, the culmination of unfocused intensity, desire sprayed to every corner, a private dandelion blown from within, my desired dispersal, I wish to be loved as now I spin toward

night, I want to carnival the self around surprise, to familiar the freak, the hypochondrial norm, to suffer from the megrime and the whitlow and the scrofulas, sick words for spotlit lives, coughing resignation of the stars, consumption of expectations, feverish fetal hopes, my desired infirmity, I wish to be healed as now I recoil toward

occluder, I want to emigrate the self through the progeny borders, to unparented fields of wander, the hyperactive ricochet, pollen from the freest souls and loam the restless young, swift acclimatization to the rich ground, the lack of family spread or taming, all horizoned and untethered, my desired escape, I wish to be released as now I loop toward

muse, I want to hive the self into swarm readiness, to protect the king bee, that hypothetical loner, the absconded crown on the ground, his stinger fabled as plow, the rationalization of honey growth, tame or spreading, clover originated from the juices of attraction, secreted power, my desired nectar realm, I wish to be crowned as now I penetrate toward

unbecome, I want to errata the self as extant leaf, to correct as afterthought, hyphenate its faith, the inferior lip and the superior lip, hinged as subtraction, kissed to teeth, the elimination of flow, fractured phrases sharded into compartments, tangled tic-tac-toe geometry, my desired segmentation, I wish to be undone as now I tandem helix toward

nearly upright man, I want to virtue the self toward treetops, amid consensual leaves, shed its hypocritical weight, the vibration of every individual in the only wind, the underbelly veins greening to rise, golden gleam recognition of sky, blue patches for the creepers and climbers, my desired ascent, I wish to be rarified as now I spiral toward

and bleached with ease, I want to violent the self past expectations, bruise it into sensitivity, hyperventilate its dread, fluttered to hurt speed, the shapeless whipping, the shaping spank, palpitations unto panic, frenetic stop and start fretting, constrictive consternation, my desired revelatory jolt, I wish to be awakened as now I corkscrew toward

spirit about to fly, I want to eradicate the self beyond selflessness, the giving of absence, hypnotize it out of being, send its memories home to an empty house and charred gardens, let it drift the land to abyss, condescension toward life, ascension away from living, away from preservation, my desired cleansing, I wish to be purified as now I revolve toward



self-awareness, I dreamt of my youngest self, and in that dream I coddled self as protractive, pliant toward the vanishing point, poking into the world as green savant, vital hope instilled by love in nucleic acid, the genetic moon, the parental tides, proactive divinity upon one's shoulders, mortal resiliency within one's heart, new bloodstream pulsed

self-destruction, I dreamt of myself before self, and in that dream I catted self as retroactive, herded to source, branded in creation, diddled to last, litanies and incantations and station quotients, the pride of visionary fate, one's destiny never in doubt, one's will never in shadow, the status quo shattered by static, noise from the soul and spiritual blur, the body bent

self-comprehension, I dreamt of myself after self, and in that dream I cobbled self as projective, residual and influential, forgetfulness stanchd by form, the trust of endeavor, one did the doing until one was done, sleeves rolled to bicep the end, grindstoned by the narrative brought to bear upon the focal now, the local instant, one's pillowed constellation comes

self-knowledge, I dreamt of my younger self, and in that dream I cottoned self as constructive, strident toward the truth, fond of effort, lustful for process, happy in the moment while striving for the pinnacle, feverish for the heights while loyal to the patch of yard, I played the game at hand with expectations of grandeur, oblivious to every mode of momentum swinging

self-delusion, I dream of my immediate self, and in this dream I cotter self as connective, piston to the future, pistol of the past, the metaphorical mix and the allegorical stew, the philosophical mush and the theological brew, the heartfelt mutiny, the heartrending shrug, sing-song shards aglow in the glass, I wrestle self to the inevitable deathbed, the

self-actualization, I dreamt of my oldest self, and in that dream I coppered self as conductive, the power of threshold circuited to the original question, the wiring resolved to itself, all fuses integral, all energies spent, a lifetime of fiddling with found fragments and undiscovered currents, linguistic viaducts and aqueducts and conduits channeled

self-fulfillment, I dreamt of my self as young, and in that dream I cuddled self as reflexive, earnest from without, the authentic carom, although nothing resonates like internal recoil, private shame and redemption, I grasped love from disease and we pulsed life into air, sonship into tributary, the mirror of personal force, image as negative and portrait pivots

self-deception, I dreamt of myself as old, and in that dream I collared self as reflective, bonded from within, the most genuine muse, although nothing is more genuine than anything else, public proof and deferral, shun fame as disability and adore the forge, sparks fly under my fists, I scratch nuance with my nails, my sweat steams and my saliva lungs

self-understanding, I dreamt of my older self, and in that dream I coffered self as productive, the fruits of minimal compromise, canned in careful harvest, regret tossed to scavengers and the bitter bugs, health and solvency elusive, the ravaged visage, the stoop and shuffle, accumulated texts withering to dust as one struggles to manipulate and articulate them

full circle, egalitarian and promised, I wasn't for the longest time, the world before self stretches back beyond zygotic alphabets, the conception of words, the stringing together of domesticated sounds, all cells link to infinity, cogitation to the bottomless well, I partake of what's prior, I share in the all gone by, before the beginning and the sentence falters.

full circle, sleepful and dreamless, I won't be for the longest time, the world after self stretches forward past omega soundings, the silencing of language, the unraveling of woven meaning, all cells succumb to eternity, consciousness to the boundless sky, I contribute to what follows, I'll share in the unfolding all, after the ending and the obvious ornamental period.

full circle, civilized and viable, I'll be until I'm not, the inevitability of endings, that most merciful obligation to cease, the comma to the clause, the knot to the seam, my flame is doused and my ash is strewn, my heartbeat still discernible in my choices, the ponderous love of the I who won't outlive the scribblings in the bottle, resultant of the shady rest.

full circle, corporeal and visceral, I wasn't and now I am, the wildest impossibility of beginnings, that most lucky chance to be, the blip in the pause, the crescendo of the dream, my mother's earth and my father's moon, her heartbeat and their voices, their generous love for supply, I'll outlive the vessels of my deliverance, this heart pursuant to the sunny chase.

9  
unbroken circle, perennial and make-believe, I am a single strand, a solitary filament with memory coating, the imagined idea of a remembered thought, now appealing to time to truncate the passage, to block the dangerous light at the far end of the thought, to collapse the earthen roof and walls upon the central I, the strategic sacred symbolized self.

full circle, perpetual and complex, I become as I unbecome, having thought myself to a happy launching place, the memory of tomorrow's tranquility, the oblivious sag, apologist's accomplice with ink marks on emptied sheets, I inject easy projection into the untenable moment, the fixed flutter of frames, to paralyze the unforeseeable next.

full circle, emotional and inscrutable, I was boy until I was man, in a happy landing place until I gave it thought, the future of yesterday's melancholy, the cynical lift, sophist's apprentice with graphite stains on a pampered hand, I wrap ordinary memory around the unremarkable moment, the banal string of infinitesimal instants, to constrict the unparalleled now.

full circle, reversal and recognition, I was alone until I wasn't, she's ballast in a gale and bustles in the hush, more than I deserve and less than I blush, the holy human fertile friend, a reason to be young and a way to grow old, I absolve myself of loneliness and bow to the rarity of that certain someone, the caveat covenant for irrepressible others and fakers.

full circle, inhalation and exhalation, we were two before we were three, he's barnacle at sea and anchor in the tub, more than we bargained and less than the rub, the wholly animal agile heir, his season to be young before his day to grow old, I redeem the I of selfishness and vow to the sanctity of propagated love, a fresh paradigm for responsible sowers and makers.