

KEVIN DUCEY

## *Berlin's hanging upside down*

*How is it that I, a slave, can get on this bus and ride  
in it for my twelve sous just like anyone else? What an  
extraordinary favor!*

—Simone Weil

1

This is a goad to violence as if the saying  
of the word could make it so the polltaker asks what  
I make of the electoral system and I say  
'I am a laborer' and she listens to what

to what I tell her as if the saying  
is a goad to violence—though I can't  
make out what party she's from and so refuse  
to sign the petition. What  
is paranoia but a secret fondness for

oneself?

A goad to violence—as if the saying  
of the word would change it—and the strike  
is called off and I'm back on the streetcar  
packed in with the usual crowd:  
office clerks and students; we wait for another  
car to come up. Summer heat. I dream

of Lithuania. Thinking of the shop  
floor divided: brown faces in production; all  
the designers white, "for whom the world  
is essentially free anyway"—then the train  
lurches with coupling; everyone sways  
forward and back. The woman across

from me—mouth set hard, biting her words  
in two. Maybe a personality harbored there;  
crouched trainsitter: a clock out-of-order is not  
an exception to the law of clocks, but a different  
mechanism altogether, keeping its own time.

2

Here's the uniform of anarchy  
found plastered to the walls  
in Berlin's Ramone museum.

The Arians would have thrown  
open the gates to the city  
but the Jews remember

Belisarius from the North African  
coast and they hold the walls.  
Oh, I'm gonna light up this darkness

I don't wanna hear about your  
harmonic stasis.  
There's my arian Jesus

al fresco in Ravenna mural  
bathing his prick  
before approaching glory

and at the turn of an anarchist  
trench, Jonah and Orwell  
lean against the mud and wattle  
splitting the last Woodbine.