

A Time Before Slaughter

I

Slaughter is a man
Lt. William Alloway Slaughter, a dependable
man, energetic officer, a crack shot
w/ a rifle.

Slaughter is a town, founded by
Levi Ballard (he plotted Slaughter)
settled first by Midwesterners
from Illinois & Wisconsin.

Slaughter is a notion, an idea,
a process infected full w/ the
dominator virus what infects
to this day.

An S.U.V. or Ram Charger
tailgating driver
w/ stoic face.

Slaughter is the sunset, apricot
over West Hill
perennial
and the sky wide
& complex.

Slaughter is Stellar Jay's loud
return in March & memory
of Chief Kanasket
November 25, 1855 there is no
memorial here
for him.

Slaughter is a baptism
in the Christian tradition
of total sobriety

a warning about the changers
& the loss of most
the land.

Slaughter is vapor trails
what head toward Grace steeple
as fog enshrouds West Hill April.

Slaughter in May
a blizzard of cherry blossoms

w/ each stiff wind
& their pirouette in the wake
of a speeding car.

Slaughter is Indian Tom
& moonlight rescue
of Johnny King
October 28, 1855 by canoe
down the Green to the Duwamish
until safe w/ Marines
on the sloop of war Decatur
and soon, Wisconsin.

Slaughter is the sound
of freight train horns to the west
somewhere under the crescent moon,
the Nootka roses
wide open this side
of the June Stuck.

Slaughter is July heron
landing in the river
or standing tall
hunting fish.

Slaughter is the rush of Stuck through rocks on a rainy August F r i d a y.

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II

Slaughter is Executive Order
9066 and trains full
w/ Nissei exiles
& Army escorts
headed to Pinedale (near Fresno)
Friday, May 8, 1942 and more
away on Mother's Day.

A thousand more on May 15 (1,015)
over 2/3rd's (684) American
citizens.

Slaughter continues
while the Slaughter
powers-that-be hosted a dance
for the troops at the VFW.
Men well-fed.
Slaughter's patriotic.

By May 22 the last train left.
Sympathetic neighbors w/ cookies, cakes
candies & rides.

*Like we were
going on a real picnic, says Mae
Iseri Yamada. One white girl
wanted to go along.*

Mae & Frank Natsuhara returned.
Most didn't
The store survived,
most of the land lost, divvied up.
Sold cheap.

Slaughter is the view of cherry trees
one last time
from prison trains bound
for California.

Slaughter is the roar of Stuck
@ sunset on overcast August
Sunday, three ducks
nestled amidst the rocks
of the milky August Stuck,
the prop plane whir
cutting through the August
clear blue morning
sky
while sunlight streams
through yoga windows
Slaughter continues.

III

Slaughter is Ilalqo
now just a school.
Ilalqo, *Comes Together.*
B³kelcuL
place where you can see everything

or MUCKLESHOOT.

B^{sq}W^{dis}

a place that has whales.

St^q'bsh

dwellers

*at the place what was
plowed through.*

Plowed through by whales.

Ask Elk Woman

or the whales themselves.

Whales bailed on Slaughter

plowed their way to the sea

left us Stuck

River in their wake.

Slaughter is Sm^{lqabsh}

& Skopabsh & Fleas'

house – Ch'ut^{baltxw}.

Elk's daughter married Flea

(they used to be HUGE!)

Let sleeping Elk women

lie.

Slaughter is ShxWchagWqs

a trail to the water.

D^{xk}

home to Indian Dan &

a fine spring.

t'ilaqW^{ts}

strawberries at the site

of the Brandon Place

and sqwobsti *water lilies*

at Green River's bend.

Spoba'l-qo

for the old channel of the White

now dry.

When the changer transforms

he means business.

Mean business, but Elk Woman's
mother

the Mother of all
can not
be

Slaughter is the rush of Stuck through rocks on a rainy August F r i d a y