

Virginia Woolf as Socialist

Was dead right about the boy scouts,
& the girl scouts too—who wants to grow up
to be management? Still, they get a share
of the profits, a trip to Dollywood or a pizza night.
No such luck for the factory workers,
stuffing thin mints into their plastic sleeves.
Poetry is not labor. We should stop pretending.
More powerful to be valueless
in a values-driven world. I'm very good
at parties but I can't stomach another meeting,
another committee formed about whether or not
to form a committee to form to form to form—
o doesn't it drag you down? I'd prefer gaslight
& long strings of pearls—I too am not a joiner.
A fragile thing, collectivism, more believable
with a drink in your hand or smoking
against brickwork while friends tell jokes inside,
their laughter jingling like castanets. *Better
to be at the edge of a party*, my mother used to say.
She remembers me hating the girl scouts.
There's a donor here who threw a rock
at a construction worker when our water project
got too noisy. He didn't press charges.
We put her up in a nice hotel. I pose
on another woman's lap & make videos to send
politicians where we plead in our best vocabularies
for gender-neutral bathrooms at the local
community college. It's less like praxis
than the smoking is. & workers know this too.