

The how that shapes the what

By George Lynch

Logistics wants to be everywhere at once. A queue is forming in the ocean and one day the boats might touch. The past and not the future is where want comes from. But the past adds up. The present is our location and endlessly it falls apart. A tangle of supply chains and flightlines sharp at its tips, always arriving. Always over-crested, trembling for contact with what it's not, grazing the limits of its reach. Who rides the wave and who is washed by its collapse and flight from the beach? The colours of delivery merge, they get worked up. Fast and motive in a blender: a scene change. Objects ride in and out of people's lives on beams of light and shelves mile-high. They pass through each other, spin, simplify, and turn each other brown. Mulching into cardboard, filling up the infrastructure of a foreclosed-upon town. The shuttle bus into and out of everybody's new job wraps them up like sellotape even as they lick the glue away. The eyes of a deer flash and a lorry hits the brakes up in the mountains. Breathmints spill from a tub on the dashboard and skid around. Red digits on a screen change shape and a young girl apologises for a toilet break. Breaks the seal on a wheel of packing tape. The deer glances back as it kicks away at a run and the whites of its eyes remind the driver he is running late. Disappears. Stacked boxes cargoed in the hold slip to one side to form a staircase badly balanced as again we start to drive, too quickly. The vehicle turns a corner and the details wipe. Sometimes glitching and sometimes getting it right, logistics makes strangers elide and in so doing makes a mess of space and time. In and out of materiality; in and out of reach - in and out of feeling good and bad - logistics is a muted presence, a mutant present. Little arrows groove a way for their enumeration and fill the sky like dandelion seeds, trembling to catch

wind of what is yet to be. Away. Consider the relation of fulfilment to being made a fool of in a world you cannot see. Consider the work of wanting, all that's done to you by what passes through you in your sleep - all that's, in the lived world, moved and warped, distorted, by the global squeeze to get you to your merchandise. The present tense is dissolving in the loss of waiting. The loss of weighting. You disappear behind your fingertip and a stranger starts to walk where you are not.

Sans-serif, the globe is diagrammed. It's easy to think you're the page but what if we're the pen. Threads of life lie dormant in the all-inapparent and without warning materialise, in moving morphing: a cargo ship changes shape at the water's edge. You see something you never knew you wanted and you become a little strange. A train appears as a bicycle and a rider with a thumbprint for a face. You wipe them away. Muscles turn to mush and the people who bring things shimmer on a city like dew. Moving. Leaving. Shipping containers spill out an elsewhere's night into the day and let it flail there. The colours, you might notice, change. Seem more and more the same. Cycling, driving, riding in on the back of just-in-time, everybody's hair lifted from their head as though by water, as though hanging from a ledge. Total access makes things bleed a little. Colours run as you could never. Things pile up and dis-cohere when unpackaged and put to use. You lose track. Logistics flushes you from your life and dazzles you with its return, its displacement just beyond your reach. Offers you objects to hang a route on as you flail to find the words for what you would, if you were asked, say you lacked. Everything you hold on to moves with the world when it slides. Everything and nothing wrong elides. What you said you wanted is already on its way. There is the feeling you've seen before what you long for, but it is always leaving. Here's you on your phone leafing through tabs of analogy on the tip of your tongue - there's always something. There is the feeling that what is to come is here but you can't see it. Your hands are tied as mine are. In a flow chart real or imagined, arrows beg at things one-way. Worming below ground and in the heart and in the belly where we feel but don't know. They draw from you your feeling, filling out the scene of what is yet to come.

It comes. A ship flows through you and becomes a little plane, becomes a pang of hunger and a dinner plate. You roll in your sleep and move your feet and fingers. Move your lips as if to say -