

## BLACK FRIDAY

*for Jdimytai Damour, 1974-2008*

The hand scrawled sign on the glass door says

*Blitz Line Starts Here!*

Marching through  
pulse pulse crowd  
Black Friday

Get out of the way  
Are you on line?  
what have we done?

Trampolining  
Were we ever?  
Made hungry

we became—

bombarded with orders to buy, sir, were we not?

an it

a surge

some tornado

deciding

its own direction

Midnight wolves

hounds and hunters

rattle the walls!

Torch, lynch, and jeer!

Tell them we were a meteor  
with no more determination  
stepping backwards off the canyon ledge  
thousands of years in the future  
whispering wherever we go from here  
we go        hurled        at the mercy of        unwillingly  
here        for        ourselves        falling

without sweetness

the neighbor's boy fishing the old dog from the pool

the freezing smoking ice

we were not anything

more material

than half willing, half hateful

whispering wherever we go from here we go hurled so willingly—  
here for ourselves

Stompers and stumblers        moving with the avalanche        the motion of falling forward  
becoming the mouth to avoid being eaten        Swim with the wave        Don't turn to face it  
and if someone's leash gets caught on a rock        What held us down was us and each of us  
kicking our own way out felt the hand on our foot only later we admit was his

*Blitz Line Starts Here!*

The thousands of pounds careening into you  
was people, not metal, not the struck girl's  
two hundred foot flight, but both of you  
landed, later someone rolled  
both of you over

nothing could be  
everything's been done

*Blitz Line Starts Here!*

Reports	6'5 270	by sheer size qualified
like a football player	Welcome to Wal-Mart	man the door
guard the line	not the usual type	not a regular day
Welcome to Wal-Mart	the old white greeter	too broke to retire
Welcome to Wal-Mart	guard the door	man the line

Black Friday	contract labor	needed that day
big day, big man	only today	pat on the back
more bull	to keep us cows	in line
us herd	crowding	the narrow chute

*Our sales news is overshadowed by the tragic incident  
at our Valley Stream store  
We consider Mr. Jdimytai Damour  
part of the extended Wal-Mart family  
and are saddened by his death*

Your father tells reporters you were a good son  
Your mother, home in Haiti, came as soon as she heard

Jdimytai, they said  
hardworking, a good son, loved movies and anime  
wrote poetry

Temporary employee

post-mortem promotion

an extended member  
of the family

No benefits  
but that's no different, no union, no  
surprise, no one noticed  
someone take  
the hinges off the doors

no one said  
if they did, anyway

*Blitz Line Starts Here!*

so what / we say / who pushed / we pushed / who of we pushed / us pushed / we pushed forced  
forward / moving with / what wouldn't stop coming / blanketing all in its way / bending metal /  
bowing metal / out of the way / shattering glass / not without / precision / removing hinges / try to  
swim to / the waterfall / won't let you / the shy that acts brash / smacks your wrist / snaps back /  
we say it was not us / who, then? / don't get fresh now / please exit the store / we don't answer /  
a man has died / we stood outside all night / they told us to come / buy / what's this got to do  
with us / here now / they say we cannot buy / leave everything behind / go back outside /  
he isn't family / he was / not buying / won't bring him back / in the face of great misfortune /  
we've been instructed to buy / solutions / the nation's way / mourn / we celebrate / breathing /  
nothing is optional / eat / we have no choice / we are just / hosts / starving / we are / our worms /  
demanding / always eating / we / always starving / Jdimytai / don't keep us from our food / we beg /  
Jdimytai / they won't listen / feed us / Jdimytai / we froth / we fed / we'll feed on you

*Blitz Line Starts Here!*

*It's the most wonderful time—*

Out of the red, into  
our one good black, though no less sinister  
than our black plague, blackmail, some fever, black  
balling, some disease, explain away somehow  
this mercilessness: some other country, maybe?  
Bloodline craving, want masked as need, need  
and out drops the bottom, no  
money, never no credit, no, Christmas  
is never cancelled, we need, we need, we'll stand  
all night laughing in front of Wal-Mart, huddled  
for warmth, someone selling hot dogs,  
hot chocolate, but when the sun comes up  
or maybe just before, as 5am ticks closer

something changes, we who've known  
and never known hunger  
call it that, pressing close to one another  
up against the doors, the weight of we  
heaving, shattering glass, trampling a man to—

*Blitz Line Starts Here!*

Jdimytai Damour