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AKOUOMEN

As if there were people near me
whose blood slipping through their veins
I also heard, and the church of chyme
in their bellies sounded in my ears
and the Bible spilled out its comfortable lies
and I stood in a dark room afraid.

Something like that. Vocabulary items
from a lesson in a lost language,
not just dead but altogether gone,
just the sound of a word (might be a word)
dimpling the silence, hires, qommast,
halab and not much more.

If there's no place for language there's
no place for me, I whispered, I am a word
too, or maybe that is all I am, a word
horny for your sentence, to squeeze myself
in, *m'introduire dans ton histoire*
as Mallarmé seductively conspires

pounding on an oil can like any other child.
Be me for a change and see what it's like
to be constantly intercepted by the names

**alone, and that new green sweater of yours
when I reach out to touch you just says green.
No wonder languages die! Poor old Sumerian,
Indusian, Humanian before the fall, the sound
of fruit trees chanting in the dawn, naught
left but what we hear. And all that is
is a brain at the end of the ears. We might
as well just close the door and kiss the wood.
It knows as much of this world as I could.**

4 October 2014

PLANETARY POWERS

link lovers. There,
I've told you the secret.
To turn against
your inclination to love
this one or that one
is to turn against the whole
zodiac and every star.
And you must turn.

That was Bruno's gift to us,
amend the sky. Rinse
the old chalk marks off
and start again. Let them
reflect the purity of will.
Our will. Our will, that art
in heaven. Incline
your languid eyes towards me
in the mood and mass of love,

let the green birds chatter
what they think we said
when we were most silent
whispering in each other's mouth
the wordless sentences of
new earth and new heaven.

4 October 2014

LECHAH DODI

Go, my beloved,
receive the face of the Seventh,
the Woman who brings peace
of a sort after labor,
the woman who is G-d in disguise
the woman who is almost you.

They will say my word means
Let's go welcome the Sabbath
or even Come, my love,
and welcome the Sabbath.
But we know *lechah* means go,
and every love is banishment too,
as when He said to Abraham
Go, begone, be another man
in another place, *lech lecha*—

So go, my love, become the Sabbath,
never come back until you are

and then I will hold you both in my arms
I who am no one without you.

4 October 2014

BIOS

Lessening the charge or amperage besides
the *de* of anything undiminished by paternity
he thought but was it really thinking or
just some more of that remembering
that has kept all of us at the gates of hell
six thousand years not knowing in from out?

Which way is up? That was the blue sky question
when he was a child, when balls rolled on grass
through hoops and seldom left the ground
and birds talked to him all day long until
he thought he had language too and used it
and that was the end of the peaceful village of
being younger than everybody and afraid.

For perfect language casteth out fear, and clouds
passed directly over the roof of his house into
the empty dome-like structure of his little head
big enough to skull the infinite brain he thought
he was. This is his story, the nutshell with no nut
in it, the shiny shell with a sleeping worm inside
a slug out walking in the autumn rain, be careful
he decided not to step on it. For we must live.

That comes first, but why? He knew less of life than of losing it because the light each blessed day went down and darkness roared out of the grey evening and baffled what he knew—so nothing was anywhere, did his hands dare to reach out seldom, who could tell what skin would find if he reached out, and what would a hand do with what it found, if find it did. And sleep was a zoo of savage beasts at rest between onslaughts watching him carefully with green or amber eyes.

So he assumed it was the same for everybody and sailed away further into language to a land where nobody spoke the same but everybody spoke and there he gibbers happy to this day among the roses or whatever winter drags along to be discussed. For all that's needed is to keep on talking, no matter who listens, it all makes sense, the six thousand years become a curving lamplit afternoon and someone is never all that far away, is she? Don't answer yet.

4 October 2014

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**Till the month
by days
the harrow of having
and all the while
to light the dark**

with no decision.

4 October 2014

PINOCHLE

**Walnut table dining
room the extra leaf
laid in, solid walnut
and the china
closet filled up with
when the bus
went up Crescent
delicate tinkling.
And the roar of uncles—
what game is this
they play that makes
them so happy
with no meaning?
I never learned it
and still I try to
unseat Memory from
her throne of lead.
There were no
women where they were.**

4 October 2014

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**Wash a window every day
fend off apocalypse—**

**the dust goes back to the world
bearing with it everything you saw**

**through it or failed to see.
Dust is the most honest historian.**

4 October 2014

SEA BREEZE

for Tamas in Brooklyn

1.

Luxurious antidotes,

phasellus ille,

the sea

you mean to float on is

coterminous

with her affections

(Coney Island, *minuit*)

midnight, I see it already, the car

she's driving

down Ocean,

the stately Jewish houses,

then shining

boardwalk full of maybes

and far away the curl of moonlight

on the tenth-night wave

cresting way out there

the way they do,

where sharks calve and play,

happy hunting, lover,

the stick-shift

never felt so good, staggered green lights,

a car knows how to go,

2.

that's why I chose
to be in body in the first place
or be in her

 in grace of union,
and no word said,

 I am the hum of whom,
she has chosen,

 small trout
busy in her stream,
broken kayaks litter her backyard,

capisce?

I didn't, I thought he wrote capsized
and laughed,

 he slugged me
the way they do, men,

 and I was only ten
or something, who knows
how old anybody really is.

3.

Everlasting maze.

 For you, my friend,
you went through it
and out her other side

but you were there
abaft the barnacled bottoms of old books,
sleek traffic, sand in your Nikes

everything was yours. She drove.
No need for caution, kept your thoughts
to yourself,
you always do,

the night
was like a crucifix
on the wall over somebody's bed.
What does that mean?
You know,
you always know,
just stop thinking
and start talking.

4.
But um,
the light changed,
her thigh beside you
safe beyond the crevasse of machinery,
her thigh you imagine beside you,
imagine. Desire
is like a windshield wiper,
comes and goes,
obliterates

all that it has seen,
swipes clean. You have seen
nothing.

No image left.

5.
So the sea was natural enough
to come to

in its way—

phasellus

a yacht or little sailboat,
by Catullus, young poet frequently marvelous.
Sail away with me she said you thought.

The grammar of analytic languages
perplexes with contingency.

Who said?

Who thought?

We were speaking
we were young,

speaking something
like Chinese in Coney Island.

Or was it Brighton Beach.

Or was it raining.

6.

It meant an island where the rabbits ran.
No island anymore, no bunnies. No wolves
to eat them.

I listened to all the
words of your journey
on the silent glossophone,

it rang around me, dark as I was,
the spurs
of words caught in my trouser cuffs.

I am far

away in place but in spirit a pine tree
nearby lets a single clench of needles on my table,
here, I'm writing around it,

four needle fingers
on one hand,

I spread out and count them to make sure.

7.

But am I sure?

Why do I see a crown
idling over her head,
is she a queen of it

or even more?

Did I hear her first
in the wilderness,

Old Mill, Murray Hill, Joshua Tree?
The crown persists,

her forehead fits
so this must be the one,
I pull
with all my night
the stone from the stone
and veer hard
into her royalty.
Because these stories
live us still.
And not just me.

5 October 2014

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**There are animals there
in anger, in the luster
of your eyes deciding**

**in the knife blade lifted
to behead a stalk of kale
because we green to eat**

**or semaphore the west of things
because the nonsense lasts
too soon becomes non-sensory**

**and we go zero into afternoon
when hot soup would cure us
bean or barley, here was a world
5**

**once and knew us through it
until we flashed on that Animal
Inside who turned the language off.**

5 October 2014

