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117.

The in-season season is all round us
beasts fall from the sky at the sound of drums

trumpet call C natural never ended
in running water tinnitus sometimes lessens

he drowned himself to stop the sound
poor Florestan we hear you in our heads

busy buzzes in rock musicians' ears
someday all young people will also be old

battered neurons of a stricken culture
we gave up God long after he left town

always hoping always buying something new
once Hebrew alphabet parsed the night sky

the letters wrote stars down all we have to do
read any book at all the answer's there

the secret has been shouted in the street
we are murderers and sons of murderers

as long as we kill we will never have peace
and love itself will be all plumbing and diseases.

18 April 2010

Hg

Dear new friend

how shy your metal is!

Do you fear

as any gold girl should

the corruption of

my fluent mercury?

Quicksilver bonds prompt

with every golden surface

and makes it dully silver—

all chemists have damaged

wedding bands)

And despite the clever

line breaks

darling, this is prose.

18 April 2010

= = = = =

At least the window lets in light
he groaned, at least the ottoman
holds up my heels. At least the door
still opens. No two thermometers
sing the same tune but the sun
still warms the fledgling linden leaves.

At least the cup holds the coffee still
and has a bottom so there's an end to it,
I can't go on drinking forever, he said,
at least the mailman loses some along the way
I can't read every word they send me
can't buy even one item from the catalogues.

At least I pay my bills, at least they come
reminding me of heating oil and telephones,

at least new bristles every morning sprout
on my chin, there's life inside me still,
something must be going on. At least the dog
ran away, one less set of legs to take walking,
at least the car still runs I suppose
but where would someone like me want to go?

18 April 2010

= = = = =

Catch an ink spot on a white handkerchief
and call it alien sperm. Pretend
the cloth is pregnant now. Unfold it
and press it open to your face, eyes
closed. Whatever comes to mind is what is born.
Try to forgive me. Everything happens to you.

18 April 2010

= = = = =

I need you now to speak

there is another chemistry beyond our ken

he said there are mirages on paper

your eye will not soon recover from,

there are messages screwed into cracks

in every brick wall. Find them.

Spend your whole life on this one street.

It's all here. Even the cat. Even the ginkgo tree.

18 April 2010

= = = = =

One waits at the door
which is only a window
which is only a mirror
which is just a piece of wood.

18 April 2010

118.

The meaning of this meaning is not what I meant
any more than a cat walking through the snow

no snow a pale simplicity of space

Christ's only anger was at the money lenders

at the barren tree I gave you voices

and you did not sing

you wax fat on the emaciated poor

he said and we were patient with his bony beauty

we knew the way to be famous and rich

break all the Commandments especially the fifth

at every foot children was waiting to come in

keep them out out in the land of images

let the donkey carry a moon on its back or a man

let a tin whistle have power over the heart

lock the children in the images assigned

beastly homework media set their minds.

19 April 2010

119.

Not that I lost the line but the man whispered

by the cellar door I must go down

down there were papers from a former life

for everything that is written down slays the one who writes it

we are all impostors claiming to be
the ones we were ten minutes back

all the passports are forgeries
there is no continuity every photo is a lie

but when I opened the little window
the whole spring came in.

20 April 2010

= = = = =

Call it not plagiarism but alleloism
taking and speaking the words of the Other
into own mouth and speaking them out

Every quotation is a kiss
public or very private
sneaked behind the dusty velvet curtain

The one that keeps the air out of churches
or hides the penitent in the confessional
we build our life upon exquisite sin

20 April 2010

= = = = =

A quotation is a kiss
those lips as mine
my breath floats
the sounds they meant to make
way back when
in the days when words were new
the day before tomorrow
when the other speaks
so clearly in anybody's mouth.

20 April 2010

LITIGANT

Take it to a lawyer
and leave it there
with your new
English topcoat and your old soul.

20 April 2010

= = = = =

Strange year.

All those earthquakes

Haiti Chile Mexico Tibet

those mudslides,

so many thousands died,

volcanoes erupting, Europe

stifled with volcanic ash,

a sky without planes.

And here for the first time in fifty years

the lilac bloomed before the apple blossomed.

20 April 2010

IN THE BIBLE

So many more sons
than daughters
more suns than moons
so many more
doors than windows.

20.IV.10

= = = = =

The trouble is

I am all these people

or was, I was the poor

putting up with everything

my only comfort was resentment.

20 April 2010

Kingston

= = = = =

I was a bellicose young poet
then I either got what I wanted
or else just ran out of steam.
How can I tell? Envy
seems to be in a coma, that
seems a good sign, I look round
and like what I see.
Could it be contentment,
wisdom even, a long slow
healing of the heart?
No one ever hurt me
but some wound heals.
Or is it old Death
thinking towards me
like a girl asleep on the lawn?

21 April 2010

BENEFITTING THE SELF AND OTHERS

Lift the letters off my name
and make some runes
with these repopulate the skies
align the stars at last

With what's left below
refashion me a man
without consonants just breath
and let me breathe on everyone.

21 April 2010