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COPULA

What could the other answer be?

Copula. The link
that seems to assert existence

from being between one
condition and another.

The man is tired. The man is Fred.

Copulative verb, but which one is?

Stative. Essive. Nothing happens.

The poor word tries to make its man real.

Das unseiende Sein. Being that will not be
or bother to be. The man is dead.

A verb is purest ignorance.

27 July 2008

MOZART

It is the horn, the horns
behind the strings
in the opening of the “Prague”

that frighten us so,
the alchemic dark, moan
of the nigredo

behind all the silver
clatter of the piece,
the tarnished song.

It scares me. The dark
of Rudolf’s tower.
Dee’s raptures of sheer

language down the night,
the fall. The window
that opens onto hell.

What did Mozart know?
How did he dare to let
so much show through?

*No one listens to music
he knew, it’s just around them
while they think their thoughts,*

*I can say anything I please
and no one notices,
and soon I forget it myself.*

27 July 2008

= = = = =

man ist selbst schuld

The ghosts are everywhere today.
And the terrible thing is I know all their names.

Or would if I could see each one distinct.
But they form just a cloud around me,

sheer observingness I feel as menace,
why? Because I have killed them all.

Every death is laid at my feet.
And I am the opposite of Adam.

27 July 2008

NECESSITY

How could it have been otherwise
the rain the sun the number you
in particular counted between one
tree and somebody else equal

diameters a young tree older man
approaching it across the court
in which your destiny decides
will the shadow touch the toadstool

before the hour breaks? Of course
you had to break the law of course
forgives you with its hands how
could a real law ever break you

wonder where the web was torn
that let you out one moment even
so here you are and no kind of tree
can move any faster than to be.

28 July 2008

SPECULUM

We look in it it looks in us
an answer seldom
in a bright face.

In a dark place it tells.
In a bright place is shows
everything is just as it is

only half as big and inside out,

2.
But is it the same or no?
Glass speaks
with a beautiful foreign accent

like someone whose first language was water.
But it is sand, sand and it took
such pains of fire to be so clear.

The rhetoric of fear
stares at us from between the leaves,
words, opacities.

3.
A mirror is an opaque light
that answers us backwards.

The only face you'll ever see
is the one you'll never be.

4.
But we like what we look at there—
it makes more sense than we do.
It is bright, we can hold it in our hands.

Or rest our face against it
in the last light, how cool it is.
It is me on the other side of feeling:

a handsome little actor in its cage.

29 July 2008

= = = = =

The word catches on its own hooks.
Plausible company arrives: set up the tiles.
Around the charcoal stove the players
argue impossible spellings. After an hour
no one knows what language this used to be.
“When I was young, no one could spell the moon.
Or noon. And roofs blew off blue bungalows
in late fall winds.” But the others, unconvinced,
cried “A zephyr’ll do you!” Or “Baldur’s ash
on Loki’s yew.” Then everybody wept—
what else could we do? The Game had spoken.
Summertime, and the god was dead.

30 July 2008

=====

All we can say is what we don't know. A word once spoken loses at once any meaning it may ever have had (how can a word have meaning, how can a sound 'have' anything?) and takes on the shadows and gleams of the ignorance into which it has been spoken. In me. In us, I mean.¹

(30 July 2008)

¹ (And how can I mean anything? Intend? Signify? Prophesy? Portend?)

= = = = =

In Dubai once I stood at dawn gazing out along the strait's shoreline, and watched the blur of smoke from refineries redden in the sun's first glare all along the horizon. In Fresno once I sat on a bench eating speckled local olives, and watched Armenian families shop in a small supermarket across the street. Off the coast of Pomerania I walked one late winter out onto the frozen Baltic Sea a hundred yards or more among chunks and blocks of hummocky ice.. In Avignon one summer, browsing through the thousands of books laid out in the sun for the antiquarian book fair, my eye was caught by a perfectly ordinary looking young man among glossy leather books two aisles away, who suddenly fell down in a fit.

In the preceding paragraph, two sentence are true (as true as words can be), two are lies. Which is which, and how can you tell?

Or maybe the first sentence in the last paragraph is a lie. In which case any, all or none of the four sentences in the first paragraph might be true.

How can we tell: that is the name of the most interesting question. Is there anything in the formulation itself (disregarding for a moment the images and events described) that gives the lie? (An old expression: to give the lie. Means: to assert that something is a lie.)

(30 July 2008)

SANDARAC

sandarac is dragon's blood
still inside the dragon, the saurian dimension
perfectly preserved in prose

where the Grail is sought and found and lost again
an accident of grammar
a long poem in Old French.

end of July
(out-take from *Fire Exit*)

= = = = =

Things exposed to sun and rain
become my things. Stained
with my identity. This plastic
garden lowback chair, its green
wavers here and there
the way we do. Constant
but with spots on us. O virtue
is a freckled beast,
a moon gone down but still
some light left in the sky
where a great intention rode
silent among greedy horizons.

30 July 2008

= = = = =

No weather tomorrow.
It's all today.
Newsmen turn their cameras off,
politicians tear up their speeches.

Nothing said, nothing dread.
Wait just a minute, partner,
the truth is out.
Yes, but so is everything else.

30 July 2008

= = = = =

The builders woke me
before the house was finished
of my sleep. I walk around
now in midair, awaiting
the gravity of an actual dawn.

30 July 2008

= = = = =

Calming out of sunbite a long
slither of wind around a skin—
make human, make human!

All to provender the Arctic truss
holds the sea down bound – cold
is a kind catastrophe, a thing *an sich*

not a simple-minded loss of heat.
O no cold is a queen fairy-fold
and in the nursery told the glitter

ever even of a mama's eyes
is what ice's nearest smile
all winter is a weave of love about

the glisten in your eyelashes when
you slim your eyes against the summer sky
and still the night stars sparkle

in you, in you! You alone the dark
that lets them glisten, you alone the alphabet
from which they piece their names together.

31 July 2008

OMENS

Then it is night out here and no one.
There is a philosophy somewhere in the trees
but I forget.

2.

The next street in the rock
is underneath apparent grass.
Below it a water street runs east.
We wait for things too.

3.

Sun
as in tomorrow. Moon as in next month.

4.

Rabbit, rabbit, say it when you wake
for luck, the new month's
welcome. Rapture
in repose. Sleep deep, cool night,
an angel nods her serious young head.

5.

For angels are more recent than humanity.
They are born only from the clash
of will with necessity.
That is a message. Then bring me to it here.

31 July 2008

AT THE GALLERIA

The air has a color
the body reads. Sweat
is our answer to so much,
a sound, even, not unlike music

but not music. We are conditioned
by our vague certainties.
The mind once shown
can never hide again.

end of July 2008

= = = = =

Vidisti – you have seen.
They are yourselves
moving quietly here.
I wish I could hear human voices
in the voices of all these
who see me. I hear the breath
in their sweet mouths
wanting to be word. They move
in me, canoe in mangrove
swamp, a woman
sleeping in the prow.
I am the only animal nearby.

end of July 2008
Galleria

= = = = =

So few eyes
knowing so much music

and so few
who look at you

let you look back
until you dare to drown

in each other's
seeing,

like lovers
but this is not love.

end of July 2008
Olin

MANIFESTO

It is measure
a little.

It is form—
the final honesty.

end of July 2008

= = = = =

Her eyes make her face vanish—
aren't you tired of *feeling*
at last?

Harp strings,
frontiers of old countries.
Everything near her is far.

end of July 2008

= = = = =

and in a little borrowed car
on a scrappy little road
we passed a sign and entered
Kingdom of Scotland.

It was as if the shoes fell off our feet
and the stones knew us.
We had found our way to the first world.

end of July 2008