

7-2007

## JulC2007

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## NEW RULES

So let's for once be strict about the colors—  
Lucy wears a silver mask these days,  
violet ink alone should be used to write down  
every morning the dreams collected.  
Another shade for what you dream in naps.  
those alarming gaps in protestant consciousness,  
sinister chasms of the afternoon. Nappez-vous?  
But how dare you be formal with a dreamer,  
every dreamer is the same as you, intimately,  
didn't you know that? Sorry, sweet,  
I learned my grammar from bamboo,  
I just rattle any way the wind persuades me  
and it's always soaking wet around my feet.  
Grass doesn't have feet. Précisament,  
we all have bad accents when we speak the truth.

10 July 2007

## GATE OF HORN

*Not the so much time to say it do—*  
flarfly, like mimosa. Your spellcheck lied,  
I still love you, a little, here is my picture,  
with a typo where my mouth should be.

Mute evidence of some forgotten miracle,  
something to do with skin. You know.  
We were both absent from the same occasion  
which somehow links us, doesn't it,  
it mates us, in both senses. Your guess  
is a good deal better than mine even so—  
you sleep more than I do so have more friends,  
they come to you in the dark and tell you things.

On the other side, I mean, where they stand around  
waiting for you to dream them. Airport  
where we shuffled around just like them  
waiting for hours for the plane from Houston.  
the candidate, the whispered conversation with the dean.  
Wearied consulting the MEUCUS, never found out  
what the letters stood for, where all the lost flights  
are listed, dead girl friends, lost sparrows, Latin  
as a spoken language, violets from Parma, winter.

See why it all seems so random, why  
whatever floats across the mind is as wise  
as any encyclopedia and more relevant  
to our current uncomfortable situation,  
morning trailing shreds of boring nightmare  
into the fatal risk of meaning something.

11 July 2007

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Did it wait by you?  
A little. Thumbtacks,  
remember them?  
Keep it simple,  
God is watching,

though there's a lot to say  
for pretending,  
heroic dissimulation  
in high place,  
reporters wait  
eager to be bamboozled

because lies  
being made of language  
fit language better  
than truth does  
which is made of everything,

lies make it easier to write down  
what the war is almost saying  
then pin it to the wall,  
remember all you meant  
when you came into the room  
a lifetime ago when you believed.

11 July 2007

*(Four Questions from Alana, verbatim)*

What does that little wolf want?

And what is a pawn?

How does it look?

Why be the one in a room who knows the name of it?

11 July 2007

***Answers propose themselves:***

Any wolf wants always.

A pawn is the least thing you can touch, the throbbing minimum, the move.

It looks with its own eyes until it knows better.

If you ask it in its own name it will let you go

(28 July 2007)

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When woke my eyes  
they angels saw

skull light spilled  
out beyond  
the lampshade so

it lit in myriad  
tiny scarletries  
they shy they showed

and when I knew  
that I was seeing  
I saw no more.

11 July 2007

## SLEEPING THROUGH THUNDER

I slept with the rain  
the living loved me  
long after woke  
like an outbreath  
to be born

I slept with the sound  
around,  
the thousand hands  
of what I didn't hear  
caressed me.

11 July 2007

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Answering questions neatly  
in squared-off simple lines

like tiny soldiers marching  
on the dining table top  
then suddenly the war is real

and all the bright enamel colors  
turn a simple red

Is that sunshine  
or even true?

12 July 2007



## RINGS

—What if all the girls you've gone with  
gave you, each of them, a silver ring

and you had to wear all your rings,  
all your memories on your simple fingers?

—But I am a girl,  
I never went with girls,

I'd have no rings at all  
or maybe only one

from when I stood  
once in front of a mirror

and understood  
a simple thing about myself.

12 July 2007

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The exercise without the mind  
is null and dull. The mind  
without the muscle at least  
leaves traces on the fresco wall.  
Lift up your eyes to see  
the vacancy. You will live  
here happy as a loving word  
in somebody's maybe mouth.

12 July 2007

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That day we stared into each other's eyes  
and what we saw there, all the years

to come quick as our slow breath  
we held and never blinked, never blinked

and saw and saw  
till we were blue in the eyes

we saw where next year's  
faces are, year after year

how we will seem then  
and how we are, thirty

years ahead I saw or so  
and stopped seeing only when

there'll be no more me to see.

12 July 2007

(ANSWERING ALANA'S QUESTIONS)

***1. What does that little wolf want?***

Mostly eyes. Want to look.  
I saw your eyes following my hands  
as I talked with them the way I do,  
they tell me I'm trying to carve  
words out of thin air.

To be there for someone and no more dreams.  
Sunblock, yes, and Camelot,  
and riding in your sister's Porsche, OK  
but no more dreams.  
The dry mouth of dreams. The dry lips.

Mostly wolves want to find  
what they can see, run it down  
and see if it tastes as  
rich as it looks. What flesh  
is ever up to expectations?  
A lifelong friendship in a single bite.

***2. And what is a pawn?***

Nabokov said it is the clitoris,  
the smallest person who rules all the rest.  
Turns into the queen, in fact,  
at the end of the day, or anything else  
you want, it can become  
any other man or horse or tower,  
anything your dreamy heart desires.  
And when you wake it is a pawn again.

The same word as peon, actually,  
not the same word as *paon*, 'peacock.'  
Though there is an island where the peacock rules  
and small tawny men labor to keep him fed.

***3. How does it look?***

It looks with its eyes  
like a wolf. It looks  
like a wolf, its eyes  
are gold and see your eyes.

When I say you I don't  
mean anybody.  
A word is particular enough.  
The boy or girl comes later,  
picks it up or fits it in or on.

Sees what it says.  
It looks with its word,  
it looks with its tongue  
feeling its way through the world  
by making sounds.

All the unfaithful animals  
run away from their master's voice,  
he is left alone in the pine grove  
babbling to fireflies  
still busy in the gloaming in July.  
By the little river. By the waterfall.  
By the phantom hosta  
ready to resurrect again.

And still nobody answers the way he sees.

4.

*Why be the one in a room who knows the name of it?*

That is the real question.  
Why be you when you could be anybody?

How to know everything you know  
without being you,

and still not know it  
so you can still be in the room

intimate with all these people, really with them,  
be them, all skin and sing and still be solipsist.

Because knowing is a sword  
and isolates. Because knowing

the name of something only makes it more so,  
makes it worst, because knowing

the same of something only works  
when you make love to it.

When you kiss the hollow place  
from which the word was pried out,

and dare to shuffle barefoot through the gap  
between the listless trees of paradise.

12 July 2007

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why be the name  
when you can be the thing

how to tie a knot in fire  
nail water to the wall

why stand by the mirror  
when you need a lens

that shoots backwards  
through the calendar

where there is nothing to be seen?

12 July 2007

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By the checkout in Wal-Mart  
I see a poor old man with a newly missing hand

The globe of the earth is evidence enough

the crime itself has never been solved  
and all the detectives are sound asleep.

13 July 2007



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As if there were one left for me—  
what would it be? What did you mean  
to bring me home from that continent  
other side of Africa? Everybody's  
there now, I alone am left to man  
the station of only being here,  
makes me some kind of hero, more  
Lancelot than Achilles, faithful  
only to my needs. A dark priest,  
vanishing witness to a disappearance,  
but still here for a little while,  
highway at my elbow. Listen,  
I am able. Sunlight cold in dawn  
trees, isn't that enough? To tell you  
any more would disgrace us both  
as if the Imagination broke in the night.  
Maybe it snapped. What a way  
to wake up in the world, too many W's  
a letter signifying never-ending appetite,  
prairie wind, moving things around  
for no purpose, the idle hurricane.  
World means *something wrapped up  
in itself*; they tell me, how did I get loose,  
or did I? are these very things I'm humming  
just part of the primordial jive? See,  
I'm telling you after all, which makes me  
at best a liar or at worst a forgetful lover  
who didn't hear the owl call last night  
though it was cool, and who dares not believe  
the crow I hear calling right now is actually  
calling me. He is, though. They all are.  
It is like a prayer to hear him. I feel lost  
like a beggar in the ragged hem of God's cloak.

13 July 2007

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It could be a case of something else  
kept me from sleeping with myself  
that night I mean this morning when

the absence of wind outside the house  
woke me with the sound of the small  
river across the street I wouldn't  
usually hear till later. Go figure  
as they say on television, though why  
they have to say anything at all  
when they can actually show it  
beats me. As they say. I wish  
I could do that. Here, look at it.  
This is the whole of what I meant.  
The vernacular impediment, a man  
I wanted to be. Or actually was.

13 July 2007

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1.

But after all a broken letter  
tells the truth to a broken world,  
it crashes through the mail box  
like a dog jumping out of a dory  
while yachtsmen laugh and worry.  
The way we are, scattered fish  
on somebody's abandoned shore.

2.

Say her name, you've spent your whole  
life making it up, pronounce it now,  
summon her from bladderwrack  
from shingle. You last saw her  
vanish in this very fog. There is no  
fog, only the words you keep saying.

3.

Language is the opposite of being clear.  
Language always says another thing.  
Not this thing. This o my god so  
stupid ordinary thing I need.  
Don't write it down. Give it to me.

13 July 2007

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The fish peddler cries Quack Quack in the blue street  
and everything seems right again because the words are wrong.  
It is music, everybody can play,  
it is tomorrow at last, the sleek  
daughter of yesterday runs among us  
and she knows more than daylight does but keeps quiet,  
*tacet*, Latin says what we have no single verb to say.  
Our words are wrong! We are free again!  
No more yesterday and tomorrow is already pregnant,  
this island universe is saved. The day after tomorrow  
they come down from heaven to explain.

13 July 2007

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Sometimes you're all alone in the world you think then you see a picture and realize that a lot of other people are looking at it too and thinking the same things that you're thinking. You're still alone but you stop thinking so. It is different, everybody facing the same face or cathedral pictured in the rain or a girl laughing over her shoulder. It is different because they are them and you are you but the picture is the same. In fact every picture is the same picture. Anything you can look at and then look away is called a picture. Every one is the same, breaks the same commandment. You are alone, a sinner, not even knowing how to stop sinning, stop seeing. Once you have seen something, even blindness is no refuge, as Oedipus learned. When you can't see anything any more, you see all the more what you had already seen. You look at the picture, all innocent again, happy that alone as you are you are not alone when you are looking at it. Everyone is looking at it too. She smiles over her shoulder and the picture ends. Everyone has been deceived, and is glad about it. That is what pictures are for, and why the Jews were told to abstain from inspecting them. Once seen, seen forever. Every image is an idol. Worship me.

13 July 2007

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life is lifting  
dead words away  
to find the living speaker

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