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SPIDERWEBS

Laggard heart, I sleep bad dreams.
When we were children and got cut
we stuffed cobwebs inside the wound

now who will stanch the night slice
this dream that seeps
through crevices of waking and forgetting?

Not everywhere the spider.
Why were the webs everywhere back then,
every child knew how to find them

elegant trembling with captive prey
still arguing with death, or gaunt
dried out shells of not much left

and with this sticky silk dissuade my blood.
What *is* an idea?
Who is the spider that lurks

full of eyes and energy
near us in the cushioned hours?
They too come down from heaven

I have seen them land both sides of sleep
and build their yantras
to catch our eyes, to lure me

no less than flying ants and houseflies
to stick to their projections, their magic,
eye trapped in shimmer, the center

is always whatever you're looking at,
the fatal mirror, the wound
that looks back at you

with that slack archaic emptiness
adultery teaches us to call
a smile. Lost children,

lost six ages in Apollo's smile.

2.

Is that what growing up means,
to trade the specific dragon nightmares
from which I woke screaming
for all night troubled sleep,
snakeless, spiderless, leperless and not a knife
but no fine sleep either, no wound,
no healing. Is that what they meant
by adultery? Sleep with the wrong person
they told me. Sleep with the wrong mind
is what it means, sleep with someone else's dream.

3.

Halfway to nowhere the spider settles
spreads magic veil
over petunias. Too wet for them,
I feel their hunger for the hot.
They rot. The spider's diagram
reminds me of my wound.

Trapless trapped in shimmer,
the mind caught in its own translucency,
a dream.

And Freud sleeps too.

A bronze statuette of Minerva mocks his rest,
smiling that same smile. I love you,
I will never let you go.

4.

And in the seventh age wake up.
Heart beat. Hoof beat.
The old romance comes back
like the great horned owl hooting
cool nights over Fyteler's woods.

Look, we have come back
the children cry, older, stronger,
knowing what we can't tell you
but you can guess from our lovely scars
and those other wounds you call our eyes.

o what they have seen
and made us see
and what cuts we've healed
and slept all night without a dream
so had to turn the whole day into story

where you can live too
old fathermother,
priest of hummingbirds and wind still full of rain.

6 September 2006

GRASSLANDS

1.

Wasn't there a word waiting
I thought I heard you
mousing at the closed door
scratch or was it wind

what did the wind tell you
to tell me, to make you creak
the way old does, why does wood
keep everything from me

secrets of grain, secrets
of how to go through things
and be another place, love,
another man. No me,

pure information.

The snake is a garden hose,
someone scratches an old-
fashioned man old-fashioned Sun.

2.

But it needed me.

No me. You needed me.

No me. You needed it
and it needed you.

The finger for the sake of the ring.

I was watching from the clearing,

the grass had a feel to it,
tickled my palm. Who are you

to touch me, it said.

But said it tenderly

as if it really wanted to know.

3.

What they used to call Gypsies

because they called themselves Egyptians

then and Roma now

though they are not from Egypt, not from Rome

or even from that Romely that lived in Anatolia.

But all the names are changed.

I will be one of those dusky faces.

I will be a strange name.

There came a time I wore a hat to work,
I knew the subway in the morning,
I hurried. Finally, like all
people I vanished into the people.
I am hurrying still. Now you wouldn't
know me from Adam except
I'm still somehow in love with Eve.

4.

The grass understood my answer
but was not satisfied.
Nothing green ever is,
always wants more. Come again?
she said. And I abhorred
suddenly all my information.
All false, all adventitious, just
happened, nothing to do with me
what just happened to happen
to me. Truth is what comes
into your head and stays.
What can you do? Rich grass
has a mower of its own, a surgeon,
a master of the contour
of the possible. Poor grass
withers by itself, only time
to help it go and come again.
And come again.

7 September 2006

THE TEACHER

It isn't that you have glad tidings
or have to tell them something—
you just have to tell them
whatever you have to make them say.

My soul wants talking to.

7 September 2006

Sophia, orthoi!

Walk spire the.
Cathedral ascends.
Fenland out of.
A place. For stars.
Walk you the spires.
Also a climb fen
from you the ground.
Stand, wisdom!
cries the priest
stand up. And they do.
Why shouldn't you.
Liturgy. The lighted
work. Spoiled
for one self. No
need no stone.

8 September 2006

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As we are is as we do
so as a family could we would
if we were so, and being so
be another some, and being true
be as a some other body was
that now is being where you are
doing your being for you
it almost is which was my job once
in another part of the city long
since being only for itself so no
room for being in being as we are.

8 September 2006

GORGE

Looking towards the outside as were a singing
I am a dragon you are a maiden
together we are a brave chevalier
separating us from each other
and slaying Id and enslaving Soul
in the name of Ego, I rest my case.

Dragons litigate like this. Exciting, plausible,
wrong. They live in a cleft of earth,
they breathe out infernal atmosphere.
We should be friends with everything that breathes.
Nitrogen. Oxygen. Thinking Gas. It helps
the maiden's lovely sigh, the dragon's fire.

8 September 2006

SHOFAR

That there would be some and then none that knew stone
and then none that knew water and then none that knew me
would be only one footstep to the moon from here and there
to Saturn's waiting parlor just an autumn stroll o sapphire
o crimson also leaf beneath an opaque sky where light
turns to a solid thing and fills me up and then the horn
hollows out a sound inside it and the year turns new again.

8 September 2006

SABBATH

Entropy because of me you can't walk across the bedroom
you can't throw the old quilt on the floor the long silk nightgown
of the fairies has slipped green around your shoulders honey
because I know your secret name you think I'm special I'm not
I'm the universal accident that language happens to and stays.

8 September 2006

ON THE DAY 10-CAN

Day snake. Lurk mouth.

Surprise surprise the sudden
one upon whom you arrive

suddenly you are where it is
and call it *there, suddenly*
the place you meet astonished

terrified a sign. Earth
gives it to us a word
to the wise be here be gone.

9 September 2006

A FORMALITY TO IT

the way the waves rhyme
best with one another
and every seventh each
arriving

 starts a new measure
the staid ending heptameter
of our first flowering

a ballad is a sinner by the sea.

When will my, and when will you,
and the smoke of our burning camps
sifts into sea mist

because you remember
nothing but what the tune lets

a miner's lamp strapped to your forehead
electric cord wrapped around your upper arm
and it was naked in the garden then
a monarch butterfly settled on your head

wings still quivering, god of the phylactery.

9 September 2006

PHYSICS

1.

Hurrying into vacancy
he found a door.
Bang, bang, open up.
The door decided,
swing, in or out to
meet him, which?

*In every situation seek
the hinges that will let you in.*

2.

Hurrying through vacancy
he found a sea
splashed into it and walked
lead-footed down the bottom
till his poor breath changed
his eyes popped open, the air
came to him subtly
like a remembered song.

Sound travels well through water
he spoke but no one heard.

I am alone in the lonely sea
he thought, and all my hurrying

really did bring me home.

9 September 2006

A COOL OF AUTUMN TOUCHES

Roses little on the table
oval yellow all
in divers sizes divers hues

the separations blur this day
the way light does or dark
the two horsemen of deciding

decide is deicide:
to choose against any
is to kill the god in each

as I would offer you
a table too.

10 September 2006

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The eccentricity of all his
shows me where the center is

as a red bird on the feeder
implies me the necessary sky.

10 September 2006

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I wouldn't be a bird
for all the weather in China
but I would for you
in local shadow local sun.

10 IX 06

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Some people only like it when I slam my fist against the wall
and all the carven Roman words fall off
and clatter on the bathroom tiles or bar room brawls
or old John Rawls comes spouting logic or young
Bill Vollman rides across the classroom stage
firing blanks from his Uzi at the audience
O then they listen then they fly then they buy
and all of us grow rich on the dictionary's tricks—
for in the heart of love one tries and tries to please.

10 September 2006

RARITY

the suspense knows or.
Cold night. Dream noir
waiting under the marquee.
She. In red satin again. And leading
a double life like you and me.
Ah, there he is, the villain
after all, ready to be shot down,
the lordly pronoun, the first mistake.

10 September 2006