

10-2005

## octC2005

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Can the tree hold its meat overnight  
can the leaf I just swept off the table  
be the one with my life story on it  
the whole future –closed to me but known to it—  
written clearly on it very small.  
Mottled brown and greenness  
tell me all, all my chances  
were just meant to miss.  
And then one comes along blue as a sailor  
and carries you off. Can the sea  
itself hold all our destinations then?

7 October 2005

## RIVERLESS ARABY

Next leaf that falls  
is me. Then you.  
Then a pirate ship  
naufract, wreckage  
on the jagged shore.

The sea is free of the inconvenience of repose.

Now things work again.  
Now sparrows chip  
in the greenery. Now  
everything else is ready.

This compliance is really a refusal  
to be something grander.  
Something on the other side  
even further away that you,  
light years deep inside the heart.

7 October 2005

=====

And here it is, that leaf at last  
all left side mosaic churches  
a little hole to see a city through  
I look through what is lowest

for Vision is a low thing and a meat thing  
we look through ourselves to see an other  
growing there content in its apart  
and then seeing makes me do something  
to know it into the space between us

where the provisional government of touch  
makes fools of both of us.

7 October 2005

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And you, sir, what do you say, old olive,  
old rosary, old Spain?

I like across the lake in Holy Land

I am a line in a book and a book in a hand –

I speak a language no one knows

& work hard all my life to make you understand.

7 October 2005

## COUNTERFEIT

*for M.v.Z.*

In Baudelaire's "Counterfeit Coin," the narrator goes through flights of fancy (what might happen to the poor beggar when he tries to spend the given coin), then flights of moral judgment (denouncing his friend for doing evil through stupidity). The story ends.

We, standing outside the story, as if on the street, the same 'street' the story's set on, we look at the narrator the way he looks at his friend – as something of a fool, self-deceived. He is the artist who has fallen in turn for both of the false paths of art: idle fantasy and public moralizing.

We in the street know something the narrator doesn't think of (*par bêtise*) but that Baudelaire surely knew: the beggar who is so trebly condescended to by the friend and the narrator, the beggar in the street knows the street. Without having to study the coins in his cap or sort them carefully (like the friend), he can tell immediately which coin is true, which coin is false. Who would know coins better than a man who lives or dies by them? He says nothing in the story, no more than the reader does. But he is like us, seeing and knowing it all, condescended to endlessly by language, yet we know, he knows, how to tell true from false. And how to use them both.

7 October 2005

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The *flurry*  
in which the mind  
is the eye or *kernel*  
of immense agitation  
momentarily *poised*.

7 X 05

**“Offer them some consolation”**

*--Arielle Bravermann, evidently quoting RK*

But they need you. Your time,  
your mind. Even your skin.  
Give. Give. In Sanskrit it says  
*The monkeys around Shiva's shrine  
are the color of the stone the shrine comes from.*  
I know. I stood there as so often  
wanting to be really there, hard  
hot India. Wanting to be someplace else,  
cool, safe. But no. I was there, not you,  
me with the monkeys, not you. The only  
consolation for being here is being here.  
This seems profound at first, then stupid,  
monkey chatter, old music  
no one ever ever will hear again.  
Think of it. The silence after.  
Offer them that at least, a soothing  
of the pain. What pain? The stone.  
The agony of there being dirt beneath  
my feet. Of there being a sun in the sky.

7 October 2005



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The monkeys color of stone so hard to see  
crouched in shadow past the lingam.

7 X 05

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All the tones out loud express  
moribund certainties – you can't  
win without good pitching – air  
inside the clarinet is tortured  
to find expression – dragonseed  
warfarin thin blood of helpless  
liberators in the Tigris swamps –  
credulous uniform! – God  
sent me to invade your hut  
and tear your mud stove down –  
overcoming intelligence by faith –  
speak to the clergy council and abide  
by what they're afraid to say –  
pilgrim beauty an hour or two  
stretched out on the cross – strange  
Russian pulchritude – hour among thieves  
my blood on your pale scarf – skin?  
I write this letter to explain your thigh.

7 October 2005

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As if the ring  
sang the finger  
the branch  
abandons the tree  
there is a wind  
and the fox hides  
two weeks no rain  
end with a flood  
it all comes down  
to coming down  
the need the ring  
the earth waiting  
as if a finger  
could speak  
for the whole hand.  
As if the man.

7 October 2005

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Bend on the tree  
knee sink  
superb factor  
of a message found  
The sound  
tells you, the knee's  
posture prays

Alone of days

High hoar  
October mends  
before frost  
what night nights.

7 October 2005

## PIECES OF TOWERS

and a sky. Why.

Pieces of sky. Who.

Every every is a catechism.

Every word a final exam.

\*

Enterprise used to be

the phone exchange for *business office calls*.

Cole knows about these lost

and fateful signifiers.

We share absences.

\*

Towers are built to fall.

Miriam with her mango hair

her sumptuous repose.

Magdala. Towertown.

A girl far far from home.

\*

Philosophy, what a strange

poetry it is. What do they think

they're thinking? And what

do they think they're saying and who to?

\*

Every word is a girl in a cartoon.  
Every man is an old car in a joke.  
Preposterous erection! High graffiti.  
Ponderous remark! A minaret  
like Nietzsche by a ruined mosque.

\*

And so in Dubai the sky  
twitches with new scrapers.  
Vague hotels like Venus spring  
bare flanked from the shallow  
sea itself the natives say.  
O God the very sky did crawl with cash.

\*

I found a flat place to stand  
and said my morning prayers  
to a horizon rigged with oil refineries  
the flame of fires mingling with the sun's flame  
dawn on Terra, trying to remember  
a friend's cellphone number and Avicenna's  
proof for the existence of the soul

8 October 2005

=====

To be quiet also a voice not bad  
to be the silent telephone the wind asleep  
why not? all we gather and carry  
bent low bent low is not worth  
a bread & butter note a girl's name  
carved into a long-dead tree.

9 October 2005

====

When something is other than it is  
I spill my cup  
the bird I haven't named yet  
flies out of an unidentified tree  
yet you can see it, clear  
like a thought in your own mind  
like everything known in the world  
safe in the adorable cloisters of your knowing.  
And you even know now what was in the cup.

9 October 2005



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Can it say all this and still be me?  
Packets arriving *from then Orient*  
the sign said, I went to see them come  
I caught a live turmeric root in my teeth  
the flat broad insipid aromatic taste  
brought me to my knees: I worship thee  
root from elsewhere, ginger-like but orange  
I worship what you bring me  
news that my body is a receiver  
of unusual information  
a boat battered in a storm.

9 October 2005

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The sex wars.

A lesson a lesson.

We come home crying from our victories

desperate to sleep alone again.

9 October 2005

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In the between space  
where French is spoken  
someone lives with someone  
all too much

in French they say when too many people  
all live in the same small space  
like a submarine or an oilrig  
there is that lack of privacy  
they call *promiscuité*

it can be two people together too  
in a hotel room  
between one language and another

and love has nothing to do with it.  
How many days is a night worth?

9 October 2005

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Machinery is noise  
call it sound the polite way  
molecular disturbance invades the ears

we pay by hearing  
motherwit to leave alone.

10 X 05

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saltarelle or grasshopper  
a woman coming down the road

everything attends the same church  
pays the same dues

only you have a choice  
to be a freeloader in a sleeping world

you think  
not follow the lines in your notebook

not answering the phone  
she is getting closer now

hidden by the fence  
I am the fence I am almost November.

10 October 2005

=====

Where is the fluency I meant?

Right here between the words

a passionate release.

And all the rest of you asleep.

10 X 05

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As if a man were listening  
the bishop remembers the taste of a woman.  
The other side of the other side  
terribly nearby. Something broken in the sky.

10 X 05

=====

Could it say it any day  
or how a pallid upstart  
waiting is it queen it is queer  
I have no problem have a postcard  
mailed on Mars I almost credit  
rapture on my way! sky a blue rock!  
but don't, the skies last night  
so dark but from the northeast  
quick hurrying clouds why  
not enough in in the inside  
the outside keeps leaking in  
a monster out of Beowulf  
my hand too grim the comfort of her  
but across the arm a different  
crossbow arm'd be negative to me  
winter's coming seal in the harbor  
memorize Norse shipping only  
now a kinship with palladium  
a mirror of noble metals speak to each  
Goldilocks and Silverskin and Platina  
come round me maidens I have an oak  
to tell you have a wonder to perform  
a black marauding seafog chased me  
here all the trees are lingering all  
arms as prophesied fall slack



the spear's tip deserts its shaft  
the sea comes back obliterating  
children's castles as I also must  
destroy childhood! be born mature!  
no more neoteny! have done  
with the tradition of instruction  
born wise like foals to gambol quick  
everything the color of the miracle  
the cup you lend me is always full.

11 October 2005

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