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=====

Near the theater the air changes
something of the long impersonation
reverberates through the normal afternoon.
No one inside now. The ghosts

are all out here among the shoppers,
the lovers of such furious merchandise
and sometimes each other. And there,
the learned phantoms with their scripts.

Every language is a second language, and these
remember their first religion, the silence
inside time when they were growing
before anybody wrote a speech for them to say,

pure alertness with no object, wisdom
that would be widowed by a word.

13 May 2004

[This must be a *sinnet* – a palpably disobedient sonnet, careless of rhyme.]

=====

Tremor in the hand –
who means me?

13 V 04

=====

In the dream the sea was very blue
and patches of it climbed into the sky
past the few lush trees along
the industrial Oceanside
at the end of the trolley line.
A bus is forever. I had come
alone as far as it could go, I would ride back
(anxiety, would they let me)
having seen the sea at last, my love
she felt like, the woman of her
from whom I am always being parted
all these nights so many dry years.
And here she was, so beautiful
that I didn't care if I get back,
the way the sea and sky and earthside all
glamored together, the sun over my shoulder
showing everything sharp and true,
the actual fabric of reality in patches
clinging to the world, the mother of her
she was, the eye she was,
alive and quick and answering.

13 May 2004

=====

after Emma de Corsey

**hell's bells can't
tell and made
my eyes
swell for lilac smell –**

there is cæsura here, a cutting in the world,
great Cæsar falls at the foot of Pompey's statue.

Who are they? Some men I met, in the park,
cruising for love and sniffing the lilacs, oh
Cæsar, see her fall, Pompey's stone or brass
and falls in time. In time it's all
about falling, about smelling bad and looking good,

become a statue, a blind woman sculptor
who feels the face of every President and
remembers it in wax, wax makes bronze,
bronze turns green, metal rusts and Cæsar falls.

Smell this. I thought it was the lilacs it
was only my skin holding the delicate flower
up to my nose. A meeting, a negotiation,
a recognition: and that's where hell comes in,

full of fury and forgiveness, men
who look upon flowers and decide
other men must die, decide it is not enough
to see the world, not enough to smell it.
Something more. Something terrible.
Something with hands.

13 May 2004

<late> =====

Half a habit is a world –
an obsession is a silver watch
that always tells the same hour.

Your father's time. Time is a liar.
Lift the child up to God, hold him
out the window to prove some
minor point of law. The moral.
Man exists for the Sabbath, not
Sabbath for man. The goose
exists for its liver. The goal
explains the road. Tap the watch.
Hold it to your ear –

I hear nothing but the wind
blowing through the lattices of metal's structure.
Your ears are better than mine.
They hear time.

Anything you can see
is a map of time reaching me.
This is history, a dark watch full of dust and snuff,
fingerprints of dead men on it
among the interminable filigree engraved.

13 May 2004

=====

The shock of all I heard

becomes my music. I call it opera
because all the voices in it

mine or not mine, a beautiful God
seems to let us go on
discovering, some of us,

others in the Sudan, at the bottom of time
sand viper crawling towards a naked prisoner
soldiers jeering at the dead Iraqis

Iroquois, the local is galactic,
what we kill here dies everywhere
there is no place outside the world.

14 May 2004

Note: It can't be changed. Advantage will always rule. What we can do
sometimes is raise the level of alertness in those who listen, alert them to
suffering, to some of the ancient possibilities. Then it's back to the opera, always,
where else can the workman go but to the work?

Stop this thinking, I want to stop this thinking, half doxa and half low cunning,
leads nowhere, just the endless sand of all our revenges.

STOP THIS THINKING

Let it instead
think itself through me

one thing I meant
and one meant me

a small cloud
meaning the sky

depending on each other
lest a single word

become a one word sentence
and sentence me to death.

14 May 2004

=====

That's better.

That's listening.

14 V 04

=====

anything left in that
old idea
anything left in this
old idea is
anything left in this old
idea is anything
left in this old idea?

Probably. Probably not.
Probably not a lot.
Probably not a lot it
left in this old idea

14 May 2004

WEEDS

Weeds and grass and
little trees have
grown up already
around the little Buddha statue.
Little relative to trees.
It seems to be bigger than me.
And why? It is meditating.
I'm just thinking.
And I'm flesh and it's stone –
we both will last forever
but not as me and not even as him.
There are quiet little
yellow flowers on the weeds.

14 May 2004

<late> =====

Maybe a white sock

sign of a foreigner

we have soft walls,
Amerimen,
be civil in your wars.

Things eat us.
Panoply. Simony. Magnificence.

Kill one another if you have to kill.

14 May 2004

<late> =====

Blond Narcissus in the straw

kissing his shadow where it falls
and it falls on everyone

Why does a red light
cast a green shade?

Khidr is coming,
a Green Man in an ambulance
to carry the healthy back to the battle,

war is the only natural condition.

Everything else is accidental peace.
Sweet maybes and the sheen of light on water:
Johan Van Der Meer, his *View of Delft*.

14 May 2004

THE SYSTEM

To have had and been a lot
a soldier on so many war
or scalene, no aspect of self
the same, a somewhat man
among the oleanders
rufous by the station one
must have always known it
always been a color nobody
could name because all
a body is is quick of light.

Varna say the sweet deluded masters,
'color' or 'caste' so we be dyed into
our lock on life, but he our
wandersman our waxy sealer
notarized by night objects
in tuneful threnody that death is best,
Beddoes in Basle, that's where
one saw the flowers that presently
took to flowering from his trunk, exhausted
from all argument, the wounds of light.

15 May 2004

[Written in the formal language of 2159 AD]

<late> =====

Emanation of

that *apple princess*

Khidr met in Isfahan

three hundred leagues from apples

where they grew

a man who binds the market to matter

amber peppers, crimson capsicum

a mouth on fire

did you believe her?

she was love just love

that civilization as we know it

has no need of now

not now, a brilliant carpet for simple feet,

that's what we need,

crows fighting over seed – and yet they never do,

there is a sharing in the air,

moments, momentums, release.

15 May 2004

IMAGINE IT MY WAY

a fat red heart
painted on a dumpster
with blue wings
lifting both
over an empty street –
humming of a lonely
child communicating with itself
below the half-far continuo of helicopter
throb. Gaffer, shove the couch,
I would be embedded in this victory
of sign over circumstance.
Now lift me
on the flying chair
to watch the shadows
of what I have become.
City me,
where city is a verb and after
all these years me gets to be a noun.

16 May 2004

MAGIC

is what I am about, the **verso**,
the other side that means

and the thing that pierces through

changing the condition of the other it beholds

changing the beholding.

O's lying on their sides
eggs or eyes
to see through

the crack of vision
into the new world
the old one just out of sight
around the corner
of your shoulder
your tender upper arm.

Oriental sapphire our primal sky,
color that renews the eyes

verse means turn back
to the beginning

change direction

build an erection

from the sky down

conquer circumstance by sheer beholding

heavy rain over Victoria, fairy lights on the great hotel

where on a sunny day one has tea

in a palm court like a hidden garden

garden hidden in the house

woman hidden in the city

become the act of beholding

no subject beholding and no object beheld

no subject and no object, comma,

free,

free means combinatorial,

to count backwards,

respell, conspire,

breathe on bits of string

tie knots in air

free means to spell and cast
runes on circumstance

all this is your material, holy,
sacred species of ordinary things

in all your life you'll never touch
anything holier than this cheap bread
than this garbage can full of birdseed
this splinter of pressure-treated wood
peeled off the deck, this bulk-mail envelope,
this matchstick pointing to the moon
lost on the other side of the busy earth

o turn with me
into the timeless remonstrance
the wordless dream of alphabets
free to be things again

so poetry is to go
to get there

verse is a turning back
then turning back again

whirling on the heel of what you said
to see who said it,
answering and whirling back

verse is turning

turn in the furrow of the words
turn in the line
and find

 turn over the rock
where terror lurks
legless or many-legged

and this fear gives substance to the rock
without fear no solid thing

magic is all I ever meant

repel the political explanation

only in dreams to the banks dissolve
and the chemical cloud
that's all that's left
blow away across the pale
Ukrainian steppes, healed again
of what no politics can change:

the sickness of contempt for the other
which is at the root of capital

whereas magic adores the other
does everything to touch the other
turns inside out to be the other

magic is in love with what is most alternative,
with every change,

any chance to change

into the actual other,
in the other is our hope
and all these men were women once.

16 May 2004