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SCALES.

How far will numbers take him. He's always asking with his hands lifting and lifting. What time is it he'd say or what's the temperature tell me in Fahrenheit. So many words or as the Romans would say so many q's. Numbers are never a road. Numbers are never anywhere.

Never anywhere to begin with so where could they go? Numbers have no somewhere else. That is why people weigh things, to learn the numbers of the hereness of each thing.

Numbers are never somewhere else, numbers have no else.

Numbers are more like a mustache. A mustache itself is like a dog on the lawn. And a lawn is always a kind of remembering, isn't it. Answer me. Let the stupid barbell fall.

22 August 2004, La Borne

LINE

A beeline from the terrace of Les Mouflons past the steeple of the little church in La Moussière leads to the left or eastern corner of La Frasse, elevation 1220 meters, simple as a chess pawn in shape, that lifts south of us and hides the hamlet of Essert-Romand where many years ago a girl in a red dress leaped over a stone fence on her way to bring us all our portions of la tartiflette, the cherished casserole of the region.

22 VIII 04, La Borne

MENACE.

I can no longer threaten them with love. Only terror menaces now. Menace is a candle, tall, thick, armed with a flame. A flame. Paschal candle to last the whole year. Candle of desire. Desire is menace. Desire without love, sword without scabbard, rust without iron to infest. A wine in the mouth, unswallowed.

22 August 2004, La Borne

THE MORTAL FACTOR

There is an astrological calculation to reveal the native's death date. Method: examine by computer ten thousand charts of people dead of 'natural' causes late in life. List all common elements: aspects, angles, relationships of any kind, between birth chart and chart of moment of death. Test for such elements in all the charts. Use a hundred thousand. The resulting common element(s) will be called the *mortal factor*, and you will be able to plot it, predict it, in every chart. Apply it to one's own chart.

At the end of these calculations, one's own death date will appear to be tomorrow morning, early, when everyone is asleep, much too soon for you to announce the newly discovered mortal factor to the world. You sit there, trying to take it in, the bitter irony of going to all that trouble to discover the date when the date is just about to announce itself. There is a knock at the door. A man is there when you open it, someone you have never seen before but you guess his business.

"We always stop them just before they give the simple mathematical solution away. There is another, more complicated, set of relations which yields an easy calculation that reveals the time of death for those who die suddenly, by catastrophe or mischance. And that one too we will inhibit you from disclosing. Be happy for a night that you, Columbus of death, have found what you were looking for, and that you have discovered the key of mortality with which, tomorrow, while your wife and cat are still asleep, Death will unlock your door, and lock it again after you set forth."

22 August 2004, La Borne

WOOD.

Wood. When pale is just behind you. Takes you by the naked elbow and wood has not much by way of hand. At night wood is stars. Trees leave. They go to another place and leave their shadows behind. Sudden woodmen take these shadows and cut them into uniform lengths and burn them. No heat comes from such fires, or not much. In the afternoon people wear hats and observe races of horses or other swift animals. They think they see trees through which the dogs or foxes run. They say: that grey (or even silver) horse over there with a girl on its back that is standing by a large old linden tree, that one. But no one sees what they're pointing to. The tree is not back yet and the girl not born. There was a man with a hornbeam leaf in his pocket. But even that gave him no right to talk about wood. Or decide where it went or goes or will, or when it will come back, will it?

22 August 2004

La Borne

=====

remake the sailor
remote from wet
leaf pronounced
as it can

I or one
or nude entertainment
for what when will
or afterwards seem ship
it's all right then

when the fairy and the hyssop
hide in the hedge
and the first is always second
and she sails over the leaf!

it wins time loses and
and breathless the dead
come back towards life
after all their waiting

around the stone speaks.

23 August 2004, La Borne

=====

Even in a bag it tells the shape it says.
Even on your back it says remote. Stay.
Something stiff as plastic once. Frange it
or split. Some words don't survive into
middle modern. Some sail right past
intact in armor. Who lets the light in
when I shut the shutters? Who walks
on the wall and scares a giant
by the sheer size of my shadow who?
Fear the devil whose only power
is to make you afraid. A goblin morning,
mysterious wifty clouds a few
and sun behind the hill hoping.
Who has to happen? Why are we?
The unsaid lyre wakes the little river.

The day is searching through us
frantically for what it lost.

23 August 2004

La Borne

=====

Enough to say so
peace of the blue moon
we had in another country

and then the air stood beneath us
and the world breathed.

Beside her mother
a girl walking barefoot from town.
A horse whinnies on the slope above the ruined abbey.
A comfort girl a girl to do things with
the horse reminds me not these things
not ever these things, no Japanese,
no comfort for the warrior.
The horse calms down and grazes.

23 August 2004

La Borne

=====

There is wind on the hill
could I be the one who comes after?

A church bell twice
crown of the steep hill

last night here
and a tiny insect

walks above my word
this is a word

it is trying to answer
the crests above La Baume

the Black Head, the White Head
the luminous dark cloud above them

trying to go
I want to find a word that does

and takes me with it to Beland
if I can't be here

a dark cloud here
like a hand wiped

across the whole country
this side of the moon.

23 August 2004, La Borne

=====

Scatter of last days
the way the heart is snatching at things I see
not saying

stepping out of the mountains of the situation
going home

And home must always be mountain, turris fortis
of exile dreams,
in which the householder dreams of staying
the child dreams of escaping

all the same tower insolent
on the borders of the mind
like a beautiful young girl standing on a bridge

a rapture of pure staying.

24 August 2004

La Borne

=====

each things of course a sign

each sign a conversation

no tekmar from Zeus no clear sign

no fixed interpretation

everyone is afraid of travel

especially those who like it most

24 August 2004, La Borne

=====

Van Wyck
crowded
where I say this.
Cell phones
no mountains.
Traffic runs
smooth and free
then clots.
Blood in an old
artery. New
found land. Home.

24 August 2004
Queens

=====

That was car
this is dark

a flashlight
leads the letter

in the summer house
half eleven.

24 August 2004
Annandale

=====

The home act

or art

the door that owns us

and the proper bed

The dust knows our names

and one furtive mouse

has been here remembering

in an hour more

we'll know why the sky is blue

everything believes us here

and even the front steps are new.

25 August 2004

Annandale

=====

Here. Having
delicate, like a shell
the sense of being
home. Normal. Strange.

My shoulder doesn't know
where the doorframe is,
little Iliads of a house
in the dark.

Dawn now
as if it always knew.
As if a river flowed
fast behind trees.

25 August 2004

=====

knowing the peace of things.

The mind is rapt in gaiety –
these kindly priests the *Objects*
bring us to sobriety

*

Pythagoras understood –
but why did they call him by that name?

25 August 2004

=====

heavy metal drive around
to pace them where
do they go they need
such compulsions

maybe the funky drum
beats memory
elides everything
into this neuronal now

begging the god
to take the night away

25 August 2004

=====

I am born to wonder
as other men to rule or labor,
lift only the easiest stones
yet they dance to hear my whine

semper dolens
the limestone of my cry
builds your cathedral
my tears sugar your beets.

25 August 2004

=====

lewd for a pilgrim
or count a blazon
stilled over the town—
we need a coat of arms
and have one,
 the sky, with the sun on it,
going down. Or rising,
no man can tell.
And the women of our town
have an eye on different signs.

26 August 2004

THE WORD

To be cold in the morning

hot in the afternoon.

To be a mountain

like that, to be natural

and die. No. Mendelssohn.

Mahler. Me.

26 August 2004

=====

change your shirt when it gets hot
be a seaman
of the obvious
the coast between Canarsie and Kennedy
the sky between my right eye and your left.

26 VIII 04

C

=====

when all else is in question
there is always the color of your eyes
unanswerable sea

26 VIII 04