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The proPosition

But not to
this ever night
the checkerboard
can't evade
its squares, words
fit there

like a score
every silence measured even
and the shape
tells what words to travel

what we mean
is where they are.

26 July 2003

A WORD

A word has to fit
into the wound
that's left
in silence by will,
that's all.

26 July 2003

CAUSAL RELATIONS

But all these intuitions
speak a second language
what the waitress brings me
instead of coffee
hot still night on the terrace
unknown city everything
I think is like a dream.

Donnerwetter! my father used to say
from the Kaiser time, his pale blue eyes
knew how to laugh at everything
I'm not even sure I had a father.

26 July 2003

PATCHWORD

Patchwork intellect
a briquet in the trenches
to light candlestubs and cigarettes —

we dreamed this also war
spoke dithering panegyrics
for blundering generals — so, so

we would have died anyway
later older maybe in more pain.
The alternative to everything is also everything.

26 July 2003

GEOLOGICAL

I guess a kind of I'm not sure
it really is too early off the Greenland coast
—Ives' hymn tune haunts— to be a place
so temporarily permanent
as if a day could come, as if to melt
that mile of ice and then

how much of anyone is what accretes to them
on them as ice on rubble till
or sandless Sahara who are you then
Victoria? Or is the dynasty undone
with all those colonies once furred your cape?

Beneath what all the winds brought all the years
what am I, pilgrim nakedness, my self?

27 July 2003

SEEING

I have to be closer to what lets me see
have to inhabit the eye
not just let it look

And then I'll be museum for you
and know exactly where you are,
merciless artifact.

27 July 2003

To win but not the way I wanted
to have it there suddenly in my hands
without the effort of reaching
of stumbling so many miles to get

what good is that, the relation
I thought I wanted, the brotherhood
of the broken bowl,
wife of cornsilk and a weasel
quick along the stream

dark of the moon tonight
humidity and no one speaks.

27 July 2003

Summernight

What these little things are
around you, these
insects you think they are
until they're very close
and then you see the flame
has no effect on them
they pass through the torchlight
and come close, closer
until they seem to be part
of your eyes, the way you see
and what you see
finally become the same,
as anything anything
is the flesh of what you're thinking.

27 July 2003

PORTULACA

a long way goes
round my base
a summer bookstore
in dry country

presume on locks
to sparrow
in your reputation
I know everything again!

all the beloveds
hurrying in sand
new-mown wind
lies down for them

the freshness lasts
meditate the names of flowers
patch of sun in deep trees
time for everything to answer

don't stop now
Amerigo the hidden rabbits
a soft mole dead on Grymes Hill
forty years I worried who killed it

nothing dies by itself
we triturate enemies
Tradescant wandered dark
looking for it

too, we all do,
when we still had names
we loved in darkness
and we hate in light

the wind comes up *le vent se lève*
his favorite phrase
some pain today
sunlight dapples path

mix monosyllables
with your sighs
and be a mother,
once it all belonged to me

but it was just an image
now it's real
I share with you
so many rooms

ratty old apartment
not far from the park
I would walk there most days
and tabulate the cherry trees

everything was empty
in those days
except sensation
everything desirable and out of reach

the name of that angel
was City not Youth
youth was another
a secret triumph

dark in the brightest afternoon
cherrystone destinies
from local waters
the breeze comes home

feel it stir
my fur my satyr hocks
and all their chlamyses
sail round their knees

these Dryades
co-nascent with my observation
Heisenbergian hetaerae
brought out of the woods by desire

that equal-handed thing
that stirs each one of us an equal
measure with the other
the force that runs the forest

everyone alive
begotten of that need
and the wind hath carried both of us
in his blossoming womb

28 July 2003

Yes I saw
her, this
is like Debussy
just out of
focus just
over the hill.

28 VII 03

CE QU'ON ENTEND DANS LES BOIS

Morning hasn't come yet
in the trees
though the sun looks in

it takes more than one glance
to light that awesome shade
the merest lead nurtures and protects

we live in the smallest spaces
and everywhere can find
the colossal civil war in which we're born

in quiet morning hear the ancient soldiers groan.

28 July 2003

THE ANALYTIC GARDEN

But knowing steel comes close to sage or salvia
doesn't make the sparrow fly

everything said racks like dessert
a grasp at afterness kneading

soft tissue to make something stay
dreary pronouns up to their old tricks

my fault my flume
the speed of things

(broke this bring of daylight
the woods came fast

sky licking her Yosemite)
to cut the story loose from its adventurers

church doors lock themselves at night
temporary religion then what word

when they don't go to church
where do they go?

2.

Mississippi trash fish and sympathy
must have the right to difference

my changes are a tolling bell
wake the woods around you

no one believed in those days
belief came later, a Protestant trick

made up after knowledge died
to interpenetrate the tissue of the light

energumen the force that works in her
the daimon of her name

horoscope the puzzle cube
unpiece to solve the liberal air

come back my vacuum
linden leaf and maple side by side

3.

prompt growth and comfortable voyage
plush topped steamer trunk provides convenient seat

he dreamed of hammocking her
but the hammock had hands

(you were stretched along me like the goddess Nout
stars glinted through your taut blue body

I clutched the sky to me and worked it with my hands)
we are fed up with dreamers

nobody knows anymore
never enough for a bank

the most they do is get the length right
flake board and plywood and copper pipe

the mixture of all seeds we call The Woods
and name our planet Blue Girl Lost in Woods

so many circle dances left to jump
before the closed-eyed dancer prances out.

29 July 2003

DE LA VIEILLE RUSSIE

Silence inside the space between snow flakes falling is like the silence in the mind of a dying staretz; once I understood that link, a vast network of silences opened, like threads of light through a sky already luminous. So silence inscribes a deeper connectivity among the things we normally know.

28 July 2003

ARMAGEDDON

1.

Catching peanuts to feed elephants
all things from sky scatter
every seed is the shadow of another
—peanut, elephant testicle—
read the correspondences
in the brittle light of the actual museum
preachers call The World
and understand how many many leagues
the albatross must fly before you wake,

2.

otherwise animal eternity.
The ancient sitcom spills me
little Hebrew and a lot of Greek
but the only language I speak is with my hands
hear me. It was Gaspé
for another war, Saigon, Beirut,
middle-aged catastrophes,
daddy won't you go home
hide out in sunlight on the terraces of cafés

3.

Megiddo wanderers rucksacks
stuffed with forgivable information
betrayal is the sandal on your foot
assimilation is the other
it is almost time to start a war
one we can win but not yet
(Korea chorea incurable disease
we have not won in fifty years)
not by winning do you win but by waking

4.

sorry lordings that was just time
clearing its throats, suspending
the easy interflow of racy signifiers
to make you suppose someone
is in the act of touching you, not so,
not the bishop and not his daughter
neither with a kiss or camera
bad luck to walk under a mirror
or think about cats before washing your hands

5.

it has to be apocalypse by now
no other books are left
but that one with all the music in it
huge hymn tunes of ungraspable ideas
jewelry and brass and broken moons
the bloody sea springing on your lap
while time runs out, born without manners
grew without a guide, was crown prince
once among wolves but god never died

6.

everything you know is by techné if not technique
a musty smell in air this morning
as if the woods were really made of wood
after all, old and wet and dried and wearing out
I only chant this way so you will come
sprawl on my knees like sunshine
after all the orators have gone home
and left us to fill the ancient senate house
with out silent listening lachrymose together

7.

we had come to that station of desire
know at the beginning of the world
when beatific gazing, dawn on the other,
blue sky eye, time rhyme, your first smile
was enough to make history happen
and now and still forever cobbling tomorrow
from the memory of some keen face held
overnight in escrow in sleep's house
until the world was ready for your glance

8.

that sounds like love this chemistry of bonds and valences
but is nought but coming sense and reveille
money has to stay somewhere while we dream
the peace of number lies uneasy, we call
this anxiety The Dragon, who spends his breath in fire
because the numbers will not let him sleep
the last human left beyond the Rapture
will be a market analyst in Singapore
sobbing like Whitman on a beach without a sea

9.

human sisters who outlive my meager song
pray that the ever-loving gods forgive me
for the inconstancy of my desire and the sleep of fact
wood was enough for my poor uncles,
why did I claim a word for me?
because the first word I had I broke
and out of it came gushing more delight
wildness beauty all these years
than even now I can reckon or control.

30 July 2003

Catch it because the causes
themselves — broad shoulders,
stars leering over their epaulettes —
stare into the meager pool of affect
where our feelings conjugate
their unrelenting rabbitry,

more, more, encore y mas.
Nothing calms. Catch it
while you can, this mood of grace
sunlight coming through pubic hair
and no one vicious, one hour
before the invention of photography

and the sun stood still over Fécamp
while the rain dried on the cobbled streets
and old man S looked out his narrow window
counting the stones it was his fate to know
as I know you, still counting, still
working on it, gift of Isis

to an undeserving planet
tender dialects inhabited by love
houses' immense variety
all the ways space shapes a
wife a wife shapes space.

31 July 2003