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ARK

We are
left
where we are
we were

this mind
our Ararat.

1 November 2003

dreamt 8:22 am

WHAT THE BOY MEANT WHEN HE SAID NOTHING

I have never been a big fan
of liking all the things I like
I'd rather be in your fan club
liking the God you like to waltz
so prettily around in conversation,
the secret Ego you adore
who might be me anyhow
since who could love you
more than me? see, theology
dispenses yummy consolations
no other art disposes, see,
to be in love with any you at all
is making scrupulous love with me
since all we are anyhow is molecules.
Loving you is my way of being me.

1 November 2003

BEING OBJECT

Deck mild
cool breeze a bird
chips away at silence
No matter

November
terrifies me
its sly approach
its penury
everything falls
away

 Why
am I here?
dyslexia
of human conditions
I got some letters
out of order
I was made a mistake
so listened only
till I found a way
could make me mine
me and all my Novembers

little no-see-ems
explore my face
but did I find it
or it found me
and some leaf fell?

1 November 2003

A THEORY OF LEAF MANAGEMENT

Don't have to call anybody today
the Saturday leaves relax the lawn
these antique amber pixels shimmer
lawn is a human word a QED
colonial attitude, who owns the green

one wants a superior machine
and a schoolboy learning a fountain pen
a schoolgirl singing to her backpack

one needs a lot of time
and that's all time is, a lot of it
continuously going nowhere fast,

there must be a machine
that works better than a fountain pen
it's Saturday the schoolboy
learns to kiss the schoolgirl by thinking

before he gets out of bed about it
one sleeps in a bed one walks
upon a lawn, ownership is evident
in all human affairs, the practice
of the heart is hard practice,
sophomores,

one owns actually nothing
and even one's bones are only loans.

The hands he plans to touch her with
are no more his than she is hers —
this is what the leaves would be thinking
as they rustle towards universal
consciousness though they are kalpas
away from it still,

leaves on the wife's
flowerbed where the dwarf salvias
which have been red since early June
finally lost their scarlet blossoms
soon ago while one's back was turned,

don't have to call they come
at a touch the plant is closed
the worker bees are god knows where
soldiering up the foothills of winter
with ominous expectations,

Plutarch
has nothing to say about their case,
whatever is autumn an omen for
and why can't people read what
anything means, let alone bees,

but who after all is asking,
the leaves are easy, flowers dead,
bees gone, birds well fed,
the schoolboy examines his fingertips
to see if any trace of who he touched

is still left there to drive the fountain pen
in some interesting direction
rape or rapture or dog with something
in its teeth the way words do one writes
with one's fountain pen and the ink
is blue and the sky goes away every night
and there one is alone with one's meager skills,

her back was turned to him, she didn't see
the way he stared at her belly when
the bare midriff currently in fashion
revealed skin and shaped one's mind
to the interesting body of the other
but away from the sexual machinery
towards this tender yielding tummy meat

no questions asked, here
there are no explanations, he plans
to bury his little face in her
some day not soon to come when
all the stars are right again or when
his stupid pen runs out of ink,

maybe the schoolboy thinks he could
become the schoolgirl's backpack
and nestle amatively close against
the gentle scoliosis of her small
like Charles Fournier penning a treatise,

one owns no ideas of one's own, one's all
ideas tend to own one or so the analysts

of the inevident wrote down a century ago
in violet ink or in Vienna with fountain pens
still status symbols on their way to
the elucidation of what such animals dream
as the smallest god of all redeems their sleep
from common property and owning it
one's neurosis one's symptoms one's cure
interminably deferred across the decades
over Bifrost the myth between here and now
and somewhere godly else,

that bridge
is broken now, but the schoolboy's lust
has enough ink left in it to thrust
the rusty girders up against the sky
and build that bridge again, and from her side
the schoolgirl of the actual will build
to meet her phantom other, *Other To Her*

is that span's name, they may join
somewhere above the Skagerrak say,
between a self and a self there is nothing
to decide, certainly no narrative, no
universal consciousness, no moon, no
backpack dangling from no moon,
no back caressed by his impostor fingers,

the state of this art has no neighbors,
only certain grumpy ink-stained Trolls
who live beneath any bridge, even
the newest, beneath the blue glossy

warpaint of the steel superstructure
go ahead, shame the sky with bright ideas,

already shiny cars can roll from New
Amsterdam rabbiting south
to sleep this night she thinks he plans
in the virgin hardwood forests of Elk
Neck across the river from New Sweden
where Gott sei Dank! there is a bridge already,

not everything has to be built from scratch
but it's Saturday, her back feels lonely
uncaressed, no backpack, no school, no moon,
no words except the ones she wishes
the words she wishes one would send
coarsely scribbled with one's tyro fountain pen
but schoolboys like scarlet flowers of the sage
are kalpas away from saying what they mean.

1 November 2003

DEAD TRACTOR

The quiet
is the mystery about it

two men
slipping up the hill
sideways
in white clothes.

2 November 2003
(dreamt ca. 7:20 am)

GOLD

How close to how
or have how have
to worry to uncover
by teeth they did it

a large dog leap up
bit my glasses from my face
half bent half broke
my left temple bow
dream shock I feel
pervades the waking

I am a system only
but not any glasses
I actually wear
lean amber wires
shot or sheathed with
it I still can see.

2 November 2003

LOVE STORY

What is this sun doing behind that cloud?
Talking to the angel about my case,
the angel of my situation, green face, green eyes,
hair of molten copper. I am nervous now.
I may start telling stories about the sex of angels
then I'll be ashamed and fall silent.
The thing that we call sex is their calm
and all the time. Our frantic mechanical
fluster to do love at one another
they do serenely as we sleep.
It is their nature to be lovers, the sort of love
that needs no reciprocation. That we exist
for them to know and move and help
is I Love You Too enough for them.
If we were not here who would they love?
Who in the world needs as much as we?

2 November 2003

THEOLEPSY

Stumbling out of sleep someone told me
there is a newly found Vedic deity

Usmadë is her name, or *Ausmadë*,
both are written

and her sign is the White Cow.

2 November 2003

There are those who see
the strong light of soon
after sunrise as bearing
a Green Ray to earth
along the golden path.

2 November 2003

HER CROSSES

Small crosses
tattooed her arm
I would always
try to count them
as she moved
and wondered
their meaning of
course I studied
as she bent
to pour more coffee
or sweep away
my stains
are you counting
all the Christians
you shot down
I joked she
didn't smile
how many are there
I insisted
I don't know
she said I didn't
put them there
I just said
put crosses
around my arm
hasn't your lover
ever counted

your crosses
I have no lover
all the lovers
I ever knew
don't count
may I do it now
slowly then
touch each one
around your arm
a little fence
of crosses
to keep what out
or keep who in
the fence you are
around me
as I try to count
all the way
to the highest number
around your arm
and start again
go ahead
it doesn't matter
I started I put
a touch of ketchup
on one cross
to show me
where things started
and began finger
by fingertip
to touch the curve
out around biceps

and back along
the secret side of her
arm she let dangle
loose indifferent
to my science
I had to lift it
over my head
to keep my finger
touching each
count each cross
until they're done
they're 21
I said I have
another on my neck
under the hair
I'll take your word
makes 22
you are complete
I reasoned
neither of us
knew why
nothing more to say
your body
is a word
that spoke to me
smell of a woman.

3 November 2003

FUNERAILLES

Turning and taking
bending permitting
silk silken
time sleeve
lost in the meaning

near me, mere me
three at the long table
and the unknown fourth

juges, déesses.

Sireny. Salacimin. Pique-Dame.

The flesh
is pure reciprocal.
The other two were his wives already

and the little guide
snug-hipped as a tyro harpist had
brought him here.

Remarkable
are the acclivities of demand,
boldly ritual, almost rational,

each touched. And he belonged
to the damned.

VEINS

1.

The nervures are not enough
to follow blindly
the pattern of the leaf

2.

parrots in the high pale trees
with purple flowers set
against the snowy mountains
not so far, war in the Punjab

3.

serene on the further side
where no one ever goes
the highway of approach

is black and fierce
her face is smiling though
her red tongue hangs loose

4.

Nobody knows why he does.
The deed is buried
deep in the consequence,

motive lost, turn
your light there
before punishment

effaces the small need
or imprecision
that led him here,

evidence
of lost desire
the tragic root.

4 November 2003

MULA

My bones led me here.
That's what I've been trying
to tell you. Root sensation,
the skin's need to know
the opposite of thinking.

4 November 2003

LOCABULARY

Can't get it right.

How near. No, how mere.

I want to be thinking something else—
that's the point, isn't it?

Words carry their own old
senses and I want new.

Vous. Vows. New
trumps in this old deck we're dealt.

A word no one ever said

but not depending on some other word
it calques or parses, no. No portmanteau.

Find something
perpendicular to language

and let it speak. That word,
that's the one we need.

4 November 2003

thenm theymnm trym to listenmm
to me, me theymm trytry lis
senm to hem, hem, listenm
whahn theym saymm, whahm theym saym?

is caus is caus humn?

5 XI 03

HERESIES

Next to exhaustion the bluest rose is salmon
and a star leaps seedwise self-dividing
historic starches up from natural storage
just like the manuscripts you fondled
with such irritation — one more bloody
assignment — in school on your way to being.

You became a commentator on heresies
on little men who suddenly grew wings
and girls who floated into apple trees
riper than autumn to listen to divine drivel
you write down for them in human words

though only devils are said to profane
the jive of angels by writing it down,
but she heard, the sweetie in the tree,
and since she heard you had to listen
and make the calamus blush with ink
to tattoo reams of business letterheads

till a new scripture smuggled in the world
as usual again and most religion is just
things we do with hands with cups and horns
and knees and wayward ceremonies
knives and bread and scrolls and fold me up
and leave me overnight beneath your tongue.
Scholars will argue for centuries which
of us — you or I — got to swallow the other.

5 November 2003

The clearest thing is not to be in love.

How many that I walk among
or how many of my days are
free of that freedom?

5 November 2003

SHADOWPLAY

[Watching Jeff Scher's *Grand Central* (1999)]

What have you given me
that I know your body
so well it feels
like sunlight falling through my window

the broken chains of light

Your body lets me move

walking far, the word
spilling from my pockets
your sassy answers
ripple before me
up to the bronze gateway

the indecipherable door

we all rush through at once

Am I my shadow
or why is my shadow
easier to understand
than I am or
than my body is?

Or for you to take,
you take my shadow
into your pocket,
you feel me there,
you finger what I meant,

take the me
that is not only me,
take the me
that falls on the floorboards of the world,
sprawls there
perfectly black,

take the black me
my mark
scrawled on the ground
by the animal light

So little light
to squeeze
my body through

sun flare thrown
across the dark morning
inside the stone

All they are
is information
hurrying to be gone.

5 November 2003

Olin