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WALK THERE WITH ME

Be assembled
by children on Christmas morning
following instructions
with difficulty
in Asian English
unfolded from the box
on thinnest paper.

There are bisons shuffling on the lawn
and a yellow car on its side
with men working on the undercoat
painting blue skies and golden constellations
and a goddess who holds the
whole car in her arms
and all our roads,
safe driving, someone.

How delicate these Roma are
with spray paint and old chisels,
the rust goes and the sky comes on
and we are friends again
knee to knee at breakfast,

we do what the weather tells us to,
we are loyal to our atmosphere,
we study a red-bellied woodpecker

did you, of course the children
know how to read,
books were made for children,
to silence them into language, safe,
to lock away their dreams against
some imaginary morning when we wake
with nothing on our minds. Fat chance.

1 December 2003

I JUST WANT TO BE WITH PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

With you as is.

No kinds no calendar.

The buffalo

have eaten all the grass

and shamble on

to the property next door,

biology is endless

the sky falls down

every night and

nobody's bothered,

not many notice

but I don't miss much,

I'm still picking

darkness off my shirt.

And here comes the sun!

I love the way

you wrap it up for me.

1 December 2003

ONE DIRECTOR TO ANOTHER

go to Godard and ask him
what to do, even though
you detest his apartness from the scene and
you know he's a member of the Nazi underground

ask him what to do, nobody
gives better advice than an enemy
listen to the contempt in your own voice
and feed it back along the track to you
yourself, eye on the prize,

go to the rich, the rich
savor your contempt
but not like the old days
now they need a cocktail of derision,
desire and humiliated yearning,

abajo, where they want you
down there where you can lick the sky

a man can choke on memories of his life
even if they aren't his
who knows where a memory comes from
that's the biggest mystery of all
in the projection booth

where did the images come from that break your breath?

do you imagine Godard knows,
is that why he's been in hiding
with his money and his Midi and his wives

[2 XII 03 / dream transcript]

Let it be a moon
lost in the ferns
we think is cloud

teatime on other planets
where I love you too

like a small horse
slow on a white road

so few things so many names.

2 December 2003

Where dreams are made, where do they get their wings?

Images are what move.

An image

goes.

This question is itself made in dream, a dream,
and we try to answer waking, by waking.

Freud's 1900 explanation, *Tagesreste*, scraps
of the day, gave
more hope than light.

But hope is what we needed then
hope and a hammer
to nail something together
out there,

rickety shack open to
all the weather,
white wood lath and grey shingle,

some structure that would stand for the mind.

2 December 2003

Put the candle
in the bottle
put the bottle
on a rock

kneel down to it
saying whatever
comes to mind

this is all it takes
Chartres
was made from this

it has to be different
it has to give
a little light

later the bottle has to break

a thousand years
to say one prayer.

2 December 2003

THE ROOF

Was it Abbot Surlo, or Sturlo? Starling or sturgeon? Who built the great roof over Gloucester Cathedral, snow on it, early March, the old saints of England who were the old gods of Britain. They helped build it, they sat and watched and made fun of priests, they prayed along with them, they sang psalms to that strange pale god from the east, why not, it all is praying, all words are prayers, it all is stone. Or they say and watched meek as me in the hotel window, fight with my girl friend, make love on the floor, snow thin over the west of England, two cars on the M5 scrape fenders ay 80 mph and sparks fly, smoke, flame, nobody stops, nobody has to die.

2 December 2003

Among so much saying
so much left unsaid

it is not the saying
that's at fault

the much is so much
the more is more

it will never run
out of itself

yet when the saying stops
the much will too.

Morning at last.

3 December 2003

Not sure where any of this is going
a rose unfurling from the snow
undiscouraged by local politics

like the idea of a city
pure in the wreckage of your street,
there is too much air in what is said

let the idea out and see who's left
the comfortable debris in which we live

moo cows and their heavy tonking bells
they endure the world for us

unglum in desperate meadows
alp by alp I have seen them climb

past all kinds of weather
I have learned to turn the page

right now I am living in your skin.

3 December 2003

ANTONIA

How they all try
to silence me,
father, lover.
death finally
el-fna, as if the whole
world existed
for no reason but
silencing this girl.

3 December 2003

The lessons are arbitrary
or the glasses of sweet tea
stammer with implosion

there is no pressure in the world
Silence was right when he
what did he do, something

in Denmark, something to you
that made you excited to feel
the weight of argument rise inside you

whoever such a you could be
I have it in my notes or someone
does, lost information

flies up to the moon, makes it
dark there so once a month it flushes
all its stuff back down to earth

moonflakes full moon ideas in heads
or as the Tuscan said unformed desires
quote by unacknowledged quote confusion grows

until we're binary by supper time
and think I'm me and we wants you
saltimbanque means acrobat

literally counterjumper but that means
something else in a tongue we don't speak either
and who let we in anyhow

wasn't me almost fatal enough?
Silence was a funny looking man
too many arguments for just one wife

the waitress couldn't tell what the lake is called
didn't even know that I was asking
for China is a different color all the time

at least I think it was, those cherry blossoms
those pale pavilions and the staggered trees
left me alone a long time with my tea

studying not for the first time
on this green planet itself
the intricate grammar of silence.

4 December 2003

TEACHERS

where the ink flows into the sea
the donkeys drink, they like the salt
the black combination, quick
dilution of government meanings
in slim amazements of a tropic mind

words dissolve in wet sensation
their noses tickle from their aspirations
as we should stand
up to our bellies in philosophy
reading the seafoam with careful eyes.

4 December 2003

STAINLESSNESS

A being being stainless by nature
cannot be polluted

what seems pollution
are things coming and going

but the being is not touched
by all the departures

the being asks itself always
Is it permitted?

and the being knows the true answer:
It is permitted to me
by way of my being

Nothing can happen to it
because it is itself

What it says
is spoken into the actual place

a being is always
and it actually is

someone who is being a being
has a sense of being

but the sense of being flickers in and out
while the being is

even when the sense of being is silent
the being speaks.

5 December 2003

Awkward as it is the sun slides
the forest wakes the machinery
forgives me again. Apples
rotting under trees — we see a lot of that
where I came from,
control the price of things, control the weather.

5 December 2003

FEELINGS

You love me you hate me
it doesn't matter
which end of the verb you choose

it means either way
I matter in your mind

I am the cobbles underneath your feet
and if you asphalt me over
with some other or some others
I still am there beneath you
always, shaping the way the softer
meaningless black goo shapes your feet

I still make you go.

5 December 2003