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NIGHT

Cast with the last stucco of light
rough to the eye, star sudden when
street lamp goes out

 there is a name
for this kind of form,
like a lover's tongue licking your palm
to keep his mouth busy when he has forgotten your name.

13 April 2001

DELICATESSEN

the delicacy of it
slippery to grasp
eggs in mayonnaise
a pickled fish

14 April 2001

HOLY SATURDAY

The delicacy of it
after the dying
seems to be done

the resistance
in my mind to think
at all or maybe just

think about it
what it?
the dying the man
who died and then

then what did he do
what is to be done
what is left
for me to do

to think
my way out
of a paper bag
this tomb

resonant with words
I speak I cannot
understand

the harrowing of here.

14 April 2001

HOLY SATURDAY (2)

cast into lampshuttered twilight
limestone refugee linenwrapped
smoked with the spices of soft
neglect the smell of something
put away for another day never comes

14 April 2001

the earth seems quiet tonight
but there seem to be people living inside
scant-leaf'd April trees, inside
the wood of sealed-off buildings, inside stone
and most of all inside the deep shade
the moonlight makes but does not invade

sound coming towards me

empty midnight classrooms empty auditoriums
but always the sound coming towards me, drum or brush or harp
pelting in the dark, who are you,

who is there making what you guess for music,
what are you saying in this Easter night,
shifting the stones around, shifting the trees
so nothing is the same by morning, everything changed

and me changed with it, only not knowing, not knowing
what change has happened and to whom,
and who this me is I think I dragged around all night
listening to weird music and nothing happened.

14 April 2001

POETS, FREAKS, BEHEADED BRIGANDS

Who were those three people on Golgotha
God the father son and holy ghost as Apollinaire's
Sly heresiarch maintained?
Dismas Gestas Jesus.
Call the physician not for the hale,
Gestas needs him, dying in hate, Dismas
Needs him, dying in love.

In a book on photography in nineteenth century America I read
That photo cards (ambrotype, collodion, daguerre)
Could be bought everywhere, like newspapers, like People magazine,
Wherever people came and wanted to take home
The picture of some people
Celebrities beauties eccentrics artistes politicians
Poets freaks beheaded brigands

Take home the image of someone you are not
And keep her image in your pocket
Die of love for her die of hate against her
Turn into the one you look at every day
Until we all are those dead-lipped celebrities
Dying for and from our love

Poets freaks beheaded brigands
That's who they all are, everyone a poet
Who's carved her face or hips to make you love her
Who's whittled his face into a smirk of loveless contempt
So that you vote for him and make him president

It's all poetry all theology
Everyone you stare at is a god
And every god gets crucified
Dead and buried and rises up
A shabby picture in your pocket

You have become every one you ever saw
And every one in you will die and live again

Dirty pictures hidden in a mildewed cave.

15 April 2001
Easter Sunday

EASTER ALSO

Oddness alive
Of practice
No one knew but someone
Is a closer relative
Flamesoaked bizarre
Contradictor of
What everybody thought

2.
preparation
is reparation

paraskeue / parasceve
pesach Passover easter

paraskeuazo I prepare I make
preparations I repair
the bond I broke with you

I did wrong I did you wrong
I did the worst of things
I resurrect from the dead moon of what I meant
a small light that means you

and always will

Easter means I come back to you.

15 April 2001
Easter Sunday

After Easter has its Maundy too.

Bring it back to the streets of the world
all this undying this jumping from the stone
into the barely recognizable o it is you my god
my man. Command: know who I am.

Hint: where I am is not different from how
and both are you. It is heaven to be you.

Now you know. The stainless little secret
at the heart of the head. Read the rose's palm
do horoscopes for the dead

it all stands up again. But now is politics.
Now is public answering. Now is touch.

16 April 2001
Easter Monday

Suppose a reed just smiling alongside a junk
floating in a mess of reeds on an old lagoon
practiced sunlight of tropic places —
what, wrapped in jute snug baled in the hold,
is who carrying now to foreign custom
or now idling in the soft heave of every water
moontide crab mud gasping clam naked footstep

and a third question for you, say my true love's name.

16 April 2001

Green is supposed to have a red shadow
and conversely. What does it mean
when the afterimage of the lawn is green?

Is it my eye or your cosmology,
Demiurge, some lucid exception all at once
made to coax this tardy spring?

16 April 2001

Only now in mid-April coltsfoot and

daffodil, a week after crocus. Hurried
and tardy both. And now the willow
gulps with yellow, and was that all at
once forsythia by the baseball field?
A compact spring. Only lilacs

dare to keep the actual measure.

16 April 2001

To know what's important
make a bid on a blue card
Seven of Thighs cobalt o bold darling
my face presses against your indigo
that is what I mean I want
one day entirely absent around us
a secret hour the edges of us touch
until we fall through the differences
and bolt a quarter hour midnight
cathedral full of tricky silence
stuck in each other deep.
Then the clock can let us go.
Saying this feels a little like a prayer.
No God, but all the numbers from 1 to 10.

17 April 2001

I have to say it
because the night won't
let me sleep
without its chemicals

Without the word of it at least
the drive of blood
that pierces, makes
pulsion in the narrowest
courtyard of our testimony

where you hear me
like Lucretia
the knife of something
pressed almost breaking the skin
over the heart of nothing

against the inappropriate contact
struggling
to be clear

that is pure that is accurate that is true
till we're half crazed with explaining our feelings

and this madness is close to bliss
the penetration
it self
of self

thinking about someone is like hearing them talk inside you.

17 April 2001

He wants to peel off the pictures of you that have stuck to the inside of his eyes and stick them to some nice accommodating white wall outside, where the animals and other people are, and cars go by on their incomprehensible quests for what seems to him to be right here, stuck to the wall with the same glue, glial, that held so long inside his head that's now turned inside out, your face his mind, his mind this wall, and not just your face.

18 April 2001

is there in this calabash
any remnant of
those brave thinkings that
started out from Cadiz
to find a yellow island

I mean am I still
trying to get to America
then if so who are you

redsailed the broken boat
clogged in the reeds of my veins

have made my camp
in your village
will never take leave

18 April 2001

NEGLECTED HORSES

Neglected horses
make news, and a new
child, John and Eve's,
Peter and Deirdre's,
Peter and Adeola's, leap
up out of the current
red sportscars of blue event

something always on its way to you
call my broker

simulations
of a Casper David Friedrich
seashore seen through a window

fuck it [shouting] I am your window

and then the exclamation fades
back into the vatican simplicities of do-this

wake up again and find dream data
scribbled in pencil, you can't
understand a word of what you wrote,
if it was you, not some impostor in your head
who felt around in the dark for your pencil
on your night table and who was he anyhow,

all it is now in one more evidence
that you or somebody had a dream
or woke up and thought you had
and where is it, glory, Homer, Virgil, Dante,

some words not even you can read.

2.
because it all is difficult, Lucretia.
You died to preserve intact
the image of yourself religion gave you,

Roman puritas, Roman gravitas,

but no matter which
some prong gets to pierce you,
Etruscan cock or your own sword,

to live in truth
is always a little like dying,

it all is penetration,
the penetration.

19 April 2001

it is a day I do not say a day
a warm day to be cold on to shiver
under the blankets what is that
when the blue flowers are warm in the sun and

and this and that are walking around the sky
the way they do and I don't have anything to say
I don't have to say anything it is all running away
satisfactorily over the horizon

because this tumbling that makes the night come
is also a beautiful falling
could it be the equinox every afternoon
could it be death coming mumbling the counting numbers

I am an alphabet you forgot to write anything down in
a cliff of warm sandstone o thank god the warmth at last
leaches down into the letters carved into me
or hieroglyphs that are the scabs left from my dreams

I remember nothing from all that
All I see in front of me are what my eyes conspire to remember.

20 April 2001

it's been a long week since we've been we

an article of belief (la foi, la santa fe)
belongs to the woman house

in the shade of it I love to hide
listening to the historians of everything inside

recreate the shape of home (Ireland
the size of Africa, grass
so high you can hide your camel,
seals slither round the shores
in tepid mist seducing adolescents)

then they come out and chase me:
you have no home, you are a man,
you're meant to wander or at least
meander down the pathways of diversity
getting sillier all the time and never
understanding the principle of unity they say

O cursèd gender I was born to set it right
and as men have been saying since the Indus Valley
baseball, it's enough to break your heart.

21 April 2001

THE HERMENEUTIC RAINCOAT

Silky maybe
what one wears
over naked skin
to walk out
in an interpreted world

Now you know.
Show me the supple volumes
of your presence
hidden under the agreement
of the general,
abstraction of the cloth
on which water is already beading,

the rain of meaning,

microfibers, retail life,
every sky a different brand of rain
every rain a different kind of wet

Wet, I want to slip myself around you
(who are we
in this movie
the ones are no one,
the bodies that we see
are parcels of light, the rain
goes right through them at the drive-in,

are you the one who waits beside the road,
am I the one who opens up the door

are you the door)

you make me drive you
to the embassy of a desert kingdom

I mean all we ever
know of one another
when we meet
is just the clothes,

all we have is clothes,
the hermeneutic fabric
draped over the astonishing contours
of an absence.

Is it really you?

Every word is an abstraction —
only the so-called abstract words are real
—beauty, truth, penetration —
all the rest are categories never things

I mean no one can live in a tree.

21 April 2001