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SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Dew on grass = something remembers

Stand still in the street = buying cheese in France

France = Italy

Italy = the part of Austria below the Alps

Holy Roman Empire = river that is always cold

(the old map marks the city of Trent
by a circle of chairs talking to each other)

ex cathedra = talking from the chair

Let your furniture do the talking.

Freud's chaise-longue

the style called Empire the version called Biedermeier

his chair was a long sentence

Slept into speech

Sentence = song

Carnival = farewell to the flesh

Flesh = chair

Song = blind man in an empty sunfilled street

Fallen branch = reminder

Mind = wind

(chairs have legs and arms and feet
but no bellies and no brains, no sex)

sex = conversation

(without body the syntax goes wrong, awry,
the words slip this way and that

nothing to settle on or be at peace)

or a chair is nothing but sex

the body becomes the couch

the upright chair listens to the patient

recliner

lounge = silence after period after exclamation point

a well-furnished sentence in which the doctor is safe from the patient

(shocked silence when the TV goes off
ever-receding point of light you used to see old black and white)

every machine draws its power from me

I run this river

I = you

(you control everything. This is just a quiet hour while you're asleep and
I'm left to be just me)

so many words to say

repotted plant = child's fountain pen

everything has a Latin name too

email = letters we can't wet with our tears

the smear of light across your lips

who have you been naming?

(American beer is about drinking a lot for a long time and making noise.
English beer is about getting drunk fast and cheap)

we have less time than anybody we have to use it more

formal poetics = rubber tires on a Gypsy wagon

(Atesia = Adige = Etsch)

three rivers of a single name

Bravura checkpoint = six lane midnight

(what you did with the cheese was eat it in the park = what you did with the cheese was carry it up three flights of stairs and eat it in Christine's dining room watching a crow —they said there are no crows in this town — walk on the iron railing of the balcony across the narrow street above which and a little to the left you could tell the time by the clock tower with the gilded monogram very close but far to walk to because the way the streets run it seemed the other end of town by the time you got to the door of the church but there it was right outside your window, her window, and a dome over there and so on, up to the nearby mountains capped with cloud and sparkling with sunlight turning red soon while down below the market closed and you'd have no bread till morning)

All night listening to the furniture

All night listening to the furniture making love

All night listening to the furniture making love to the room

The room makes love to the house

For no conceivable reason x loves y

Love each other

Doors are there mostly to make it hard for furniture to leave the room

Sorrow of a room abandoned by its chairs

The child's pen runs out of ink

He doesn't know where to turn

Turn = drink from a fountain

fountain = girls bend down to drink and splash around and laugh

see them

seeing = exile

to see the world is to be far from it

far from them

love = lose

lose = forget the otherness of the other

priests bake bread around the corner

streets multiply

lose = to forget the address

love = to remember the address

love = to climb the stairs

hive = listen to them making honey

honey = bread

bread = priests

street = series of integers

tree full of heart shaped leaves

sunshine = in the garden of the stone elephant a man's arm around a woman's waist

integer = a number

as far as her house was above the ground outside the windows were the leaves of the prolific ailanthus a Chinese tree

it was raining outside her house

she said = I've got your number

(a relationship betrays the pure moments of time)

isolated integers betrayed

(betrays moments into a pattern)

pattern = commodity

who brought this tree here

who remembered the furniture

phone number

street = outside our love there is hardly any town

streets are multiples of going straight

Damascus

Dirt road by the river

(we knew no common language but we had both watched a lot of Bergmann movies so we tried to communicate in Swedish)

(I said your skin is blue she said you are playing with my death)

honey by the river

the priests have gone to sleep the bread is all sold

the numbers are all taken

young men with nothing else to do can always carry guitars

we learn how to dance by standing still

there is only one dancer ever

bread = something to do with your mouth while the word is waiting

(so much time and philosophy and poetry and love are about putting things into other things)

so furniture is made

mortise and tenon

tongue and groove

tongue and lap

Roman de la Rose

mulch all over your shoes

is the ink finished with the words yet

(is language still here
even after we speak)

no matter how many languages you learn you can't forget this one

this is the one

you are the one

(how can a man still alive have so much to say)

rose = import

when a mediaeval poet talks about a rose, she means something that comes
from Palestine or even truer countries further east

rose = fire

rose = rumor

all mediaeval poets were women — their male amanuenses signed the work

Virgil and Homer were women too

Only Sappho was a man

a glass door, I mean a lawnmower

a telephone, an island in the sea, Serendip, a man

no voice is who I pretend to be

(our relationship will never go far = we are too near)

there is always a machine doing something outside

outside is where things are done

inside is all knowing

(even if you can't play the piano you can always learn to sit beautifully still upon a chair)

chair = instructor

chair = choir

chair = sluggish bee in autumn sunlight
waiting to sting a soft place

chair = a branch fallen from the linden tree

chair = a book about the architect

chair = a neutral value in a crowded palette

chair = a deft movement in a crowded room

chair = they all touch you at once

chair = cloud

(how many people can sit on it = at the same time I love you, I am still me.
Or conversely)

chair = conversation

conversation = love affair

love affair = supposed to be in heaven

(she came through the door at first light to wake me her filmy white peignoir
flowing around her the water I swam through to wake)

was I awake yet = was it Italy or here

she came to wake me

heaven = the habit of being happy no matter what

(being accurate without rhyme)

loveseat = approximation

hill in Germany = lyre

remembering = telling lies

(don't hurry the overture, the world isn't ready yet behind your curtains)

after all these continuities ready to begin

chair = the sum of we keep trying to say to one another

this and that = who

chair = tile in a mosaic wall

(will never stop talking)

rose = thing that catches dew

chair = quiet howitzer

chair = three brunettes climbing up to the castle in Prague, a trolley car crosses the river on its way there, brushes against a leafy tree branch every time

chair = chemistry

(how many space in an open field)

plein air = your feathered hat

(to be with the one who moves you most)

piano = furniture

flower garden = unseen telephone

(a smell I sent you by voodoo or other magic means)

(you woke up and your house was full of it)

(but was it your house)

your house = someone's chair

your chair = you belong to me

me = everything you confess is yours

magic = sodium chloride common salt

verge = edge or wedge

verge = tend or penetrate or bend

dew = be there before the end

end = the light comes over the hill and it's anyday today

dew = the love-spewed smear from some high lover's business

(as if the swollen earth were pregnant with one more dawn than can fit into the ordinary day)

give me that dawn

give me that light you only are

dew = an arrow

arrow = name

name = animal

animal = wolf

wolf = tidings

(what news from the sea?)

what if my name were really all you say to me

you call me and I come

truth serum = tree sap, sticky fingers, mistletoe

on a hill in France

garance = a kind of scarlet

the water is inside the fruit

it breaks and lets the ocean out

surf = ash of the burnt sea

(there is a little-known valley in the high Tamirs where a battle has been going on continuously for eight hundred years, I don't mean a war with its own exhaustions and intermittenencies, I mean an actual non-stop battle, all day long, all night long as far as they can see, eight hundred years. It is said that the reason why all the lands nearby are desert or nearly so is that generation after generation of farmers and tribesmen and artisans have hurried by themselves or been dragged by others to the battle, eight hundred years, and the women all went away. No one to cultivate the land. If no one does it, the wind does it, and sun. And night. Now the warriors must come always from further and further away to reach the place of battle among the weary mountains. The battle goes on, the men flood in from far away, the desert grows and grows, both sides (if there are sides, I am not sure, it is not told) pray to the Lord, the God of Hosts, and pray for more weapons and more men, and pray for peace)

They come from the horizon

Each one

Carrying a chair

Chair = tell the truth if you have to

Chair = anger is always against oneself

(name the valley, help her brush her hair)

chair = self-portrait carved in wax

chair = even a living person will last longer than Egypt

chair = Fayum

chair = the mystics of upstate New York, Elmira, Moroni's hill

chair = on the bottom of the lake a woman sits well able to speak without breathing

to breathe without meaning

chair = until everyone is seated and most have fallen asleep a chair is about conversation

conversation = learning what you really mean
 by means of telling mistakes and approximations
 to other people
 and listening to theirs

conversation = always is about desire

conversation = is desire

(double-stopped fiddles circular-breathing clarinetist)

pieces of sound

chair = music

a chair is music that listens to you

to you for a change

like a lawn with a fox on it after midnight

“the Sessile Quotient is a figure that expresses the number of persons seated as a percentage of the total number of persons assembled. Thus a formal state dinner would have $SQ = 100$, since every single guest [servants and attendants are not considered persons for the purposes of determining the SQ] is expected to be seated at all times, and duly provided accordingly with an inalienable chair, while an informal, impromptu party in someone’s apartment might have only a few seats for a large but ever fluctuating number of guests. Quite exciting parties in the judgment of participants might have Sessile Quotients as low as 9 — fewer than one person in ten will have a seat of his or her own for the duration of the party. Remember that the Sessile Quotient must always be coordinated with the Cathedratric Duration, the percentage of time that a guest at an assembly is actually seated or reclining. Usually, the SQ varies directly with the CD, but not always [examples given]. . .”

chair = an animal

wind = mind

temperature = number

leaf = mouth

(when the bough breaks = you find it on the lawn)

most chairs are made of wood

ta jupe = your rayon skirt flared for flouncing

the telephone knows but never tells

(a woman who could tell a real rainpuddle from just some water lying on the ground)

smoke plume from signal fire

the sky flies away

chair = leaving me here

I am one who comes behind you

I am not worth
the regulation of your shoes to loosen

recusant = one who says no, refuser, foreigner to the bliss of yes

I am mouth not mouth

chair = a word slipping out of your lips

chair = a bloodied word slipping out of your teeth

(freedom and blue passage)

a circumcised word = freedom

chair

chair table floorlamp mantle clock

chair = a paragraph

chair = assertions and negations

chair = do not forget me in your body

chair = triumphal arch

chair = each one is one each

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