

11-2000

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[SUITE ON TWO EARLY PIECES BY RICHARD STRAUSS]

flutes and horns the sacred hollow  
bone at the core of music

*sumus quod audimus*

Already, teenager, Opus 7, he knows  
how to unlock the granary of the heart

that rat, that grand Bavarian rat,  
makes me feed on my feelings

the more we eat the more we feel  
the more we feel the more we are

live a hundred years  
found being on being alone)

my bone. *Ma ruche.*  
You hum. You whom I have desired  
since first I heard your sound

(red leaf alder, yellow elm)  
*le roi des aulnes*

birds streaking across the veldt  
*strouthoi*, ostriches, sparrows,  
*strouthoi* haul her chariot  
down the air, hurrying towards love  
with quizzical aureate bouquets,

but if it could only  
sound, othernesses of sand,  
the desert made  
to craze with roses, all that,

sum, sand, sound, *Sammlung*  
*aller Samen*, tous les semences  
all the seeds heaped together

for the air itself  
is a seed

the breath  
knows how to plant

it everywhere.

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*le cahiers*

slim book in which  
the woman knows how to inscribe  
slow thoroughly the exact  
name of everything she sees

held in relation, all clusters, all the harmonies

and this book becomes the same as fate,

the gods read it  
and puzzle out  
the intricate syntax of the human heart  
the darkest hardest grammar of the world.

8 November 2000

[SUITE COMPOSED DURING BRAHMS'S SERENADE IN D, OP.11]

Bronze door freemasons the Judges  
line up on their littered bench

the prosecutor is speaking Finnish and too fast  
rocks back and forth his heels squeaking:

“Have you ever noticed how a criminal  
smiles like a cello? How the moon  
sneaks up through the raspberry bushes one night  
and over gorse another? What shall we  
do with time?”

Isn't number  
itself the crime?

“Have you ever  
tasted heather?”

fetal heartbeat measured  
on the pulse of a deer stretched  
over the chasm  
between one person and another  
leaping,  
foreleg there and hind leg here,  
the world's retreating, have you?”

Leather? My lawyer rises to resist.

“Linenfold wainscot, neatsfoot oil,  
egg of plover!”

I almost believe him.  
I am guilty and I know it,

I confess  
I want you, I dream of the occasion,  
how could I refute the accusation?

“This man (he turns to me) is Mercury,  
how could he help but turn  
her Gold into his bleak alloy?”



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*Brahms is greater than ———-, but not as good.*

The sun rises from a cello  
and the steel of the sky  
is etched by words.

Winter in north Germany,  
everybody loves somebody,  
the world is wonderful,

not always the right one,  
the world is terrible,  
terrible the unreciprocated light.

8 November 2000, Olin

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So we came back home  
and who knows where that is

a stag and a shadow  
a tree with no crow

and the house was warm  
rooms spilled out in lamplight

kitchen ants asleep  
thousands of people in the closet

a smile is a cellar  
go all the way down for deep wine

no bottle holds  
we drank from one another

everything is a cup  
everything knows what we don't know

the house knows  
where death is hidden

where the crows stand  
vague looks they give us

baffled between food and fear  
a tree with no shadows

a moon that gives no light

9 November 2000

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Get your graphic systems  
cogged on Arcturus  
close aligned. We find  
the world every night

under our tongue,  
spit it out, olive pit,  
star by star until  
the blackness stings with light.

9 November 2000  
Tivoli



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I am waiting for me  
at the end of the candle

wait for the guilty party  
deep in the forests of desire

suddenly the thing he wants  
looks him in the eye

it fires and he dies.  
That's the song

any candle sings  
no wonder the moths listen

tonight's no different  
a hint of rain

Thursday or Friday  
a falling government

a woman on her way  
to or back from Spain.

9 November 2000  
Tivoli

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Too many close in the closet  
they scream all night the herds in there  
troupeaux de Naiades the mountains rise there the water falls

from under the door a shallow river runs  
blue or yellow it tastes of rust  
dervish weather in there, you bury your head in the pillow

the soft *thing for the ears* your mother made you  
you bury your dead in your dream  
the closet in the hall that never opens never opens

this is what every child knows and you forgot:  
all the dead people live inside the furniture  
they are pine and oak they are plastic

all night they come closer and closer to you  
where you sleep you try to sleep  
your eyes measuring the chest of drawers the chair

waiting paralyzed for the closet to open  
and it doesn't matter what comes out, what counts  
is that they come to take you in.

9 November 2000

## IGUAÇU FALLS

I watch you fall

your falls  
are legion

are legends

I dare repeat

to me,

daring myself

to fall as far as you.

9 November 2000  
Tivoli

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## WHY DANCERS LOVE ME

Because I am big I am solid I stand  
At the center like the center of something  
Not too scary and not too far. I am here.  
Whatever I am I am here. Dancers love me  
Because my mind is smooth as their bodies,  
Because my mind is supple and quick as their limbs  
But doesn't hurt anybody, a dancer  
Never hurts anybody, why is that, everybody  
Hurts somebody why doesn't she? Or he?  
Because I sit still and watch them  
And they can feel me watching. They can hear  
Their movements and their grace  
Come out of my mouth as words. They can see  
Themselves in me — their moves my stillness,  
Their leaps my words, their rhythms  
The silences from which I move. Because  
I move them as they move me, mysteriously.  
We don't know why, we look at each other  
And we cry or something or we laugh  
And don't know why. Dancers love me  
Because they don't know who I am, and that being so  
It's all right for them not to know who they are too.  
They are nobody, I am nobody, they dance,  
I answer. Dancers love me because I answer  
And when I do they realize suddenly their  
Dance has been a question all the while.

9 November 2000

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What if the seeds  
of an old woman walking her dog  
were the same as sex?

What if the sky could actually see?

10 November 2000

## CARBARN

we said,  
Eliot Street we said, back of Cronin's,  
and who remembers all those ashes now

memory is the faeces of thinking —

there must be some other mindfulness,  
Mnemosyne,

not about storage but about tomorrow  
(but tomorrow is the faeces of today)

I don't know what I want the other thing to be.

10 November 2000

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*Praxilla was singing*

And there are things that can exalt us  
there are clocks too and cucumbers  
to make sure we stay on earth  
and stop screwing around with heaven

10 November 2000

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Give me your word, dark afternoon!  
First we've had in weeks,  
these clouds must be with wisdom stored,

stuffed with sagesse, azimuths of glory  
broken over the secants of the world,

we breathe pure light  
undistracted by the brightness of the sun

lake light limb light eye light veil  
floating down —

—Who wove you?  
Miriam, the Madeleine.

—Who may wear you?  
... *you*. I am an echo  
in light  
of what you speak  
in dark.

—In darkened theaters?  
Art is only suicide.  
Inside your thinking  
the dark is  
it is my nature to recite  
and by speaking  
illuminate like a winter morning  
when you haven't slept  
and from the Smith-9<sup>th</sup> Street station  
you see the city you must answer to,

—But what if I don't think?  
I wasn't talking to you,

My cloth is meant



And unmeant,

It clothes the naked  
And makes the clothed look nude,

My cloth is meant  
Instead of thinking

Or deep inside it  
Where the images are stored

Old yellowed ivory in the dingy attic  
You hear a Viking rainstorm on the roof  
Only a foot above your young head,

You were born here  
You will never understand

Slates with no chalk  
Rain without a mouth.

10 November 2000

# ST

St exalted st come round  
my corner you are my stoop  
st seat st soft step sit on me  
everything means another fucking thing  
a thing

know what we can  
and for the rest  
leave it to the skin

the worst that can happen then is leprosy  
and then some Jesus comes along and says Be clean

be clean and holy

be something else

\*

I don't know what I believe some days  
Some days the cars make more sense than people  
The smell of my father's Pontiac  
Is not the same as sunshine in the Dolomites  
But both can make me puke with nostalgia

my body heaving to be some other place some other time

When the only time there is  
Is this body itself,  
not borrowed from some old poem  
born with me born as me

*le corps même*

the space from which I come

And the only space we own is this thing we stand in  
pale puppet with such worshipful thighs

\*

is that it, boss?

is that the thing you meant me to say

the thing you invented language to inscribe,

the other, the other with its soft fluffy tail its wings on fire its iron hands

is this it even now

this thing I say

this thing you make me say

the animal on its way

to being, even it,

to being other than it is,

the Other's other — could that finally be me?

11 November 2000

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I could have been trying to listen to myself  
But it was Napoleon and Sherlock Holmes instead  
Like a crazy man hearing voices from the furniture

So I know some names I never knew before  
And why the Rue de Rivoli is called Rivoli  
And what the cleavage pattern of a diamond is

But I don't hear anything talking from inside me  
In the damp grey basement gymnasium my Athens  
Unless this is wit and these are muses, words alone

That slip along my brow and my hands (how?) hear.

11 November 2000

