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## **NEW MOON**

We'll have a new moon tonight.

So tell me (said Yankel)  
what was wrong with the old one?  
It had flecks and smudges on it  
and it tended to dwindle all month long  
until it went out and somebody  
had to get it lit again,  
but we could live with that,  
and personally I like those dark  
moon nights, for romance,  
for escaping. This new moon  
you talk about,  
won't it keep shining all the time,  
won't it hang in the sky like a traffic light  
even when the sun is out?  
It'll make me nervous all afternoon  
and I'll never get out of here come night.

12 October 2004

## **BROOKLYN**

is my fact.

Corner of Fifth and Fifth

literal. Charlotte

on the avenue, I on the street.

Sidewalk terrace of the Belleville  
café. 6:17, the light fading.

Filet de morue later, lotte aux cèpes

later, 6:47, the blue blur

ganging up on those eastern streets,

over Prospect Park the dark is coming

over Crown Heights where I used to live

and Brownsville before that, and City Line

and Idlewild the dark is coming,

from Queens, the Salisbury Plains,

Montauk, night is coming

from Europe, Africa, Asia,

the dark is coming from the orient, the dark

is coming from where the light is made.

12 October 2004

Brooklyn

=====  
Not have to have  
I have to have.  
Knowing. Holding everybody  
by the name. She stands there  
like a yew tree at the door.  
It is the prime of autumn,  
they say the peak. Milk  
runs down the slope.  
A casein paint she says  
made from human milk.  
And pray what would the pigment be  
worthy of such medium?  
Say it, don't do it.  
Don't do anything.  
Don't milk your breast.  
Pour into us instead  
the juice of your entitlements  
attending to every acre of the word  
every suburb of the mood.  
It has become the case you live in me.

12 October 2004  
Hotel Wolcott

=====

(thinking of Sophocles)

Face at no window  
sun catches thirteenth floor  
and sends it down the shaft  
looking in on all of us

some light. Who are we.  
Children of the sun  
fleeing from that loving  
father. It is a horror

to have been begotten,  
to take your place  
in a line of consequences,  
a mere result of causes.

Ever after. So what.  
The sun warms and pleases  
burns and withers.  
The face at no window

has no control.  
Can I accept this sonship  
of the unknown obvious  
above? Not to have been

born and yet to be  
is best, to endure  
presence and awareness  
like sun on an old brick wall.

13 October 2004 NYC

=====

The sun reminds me I was begun,  
got great, will go.

Presumably

to come again  
after some quiet music  
and let it be another day.

That I

am no different from time.  
And time no different from going.  
Sometimes I feel time on my skin  
not like sunlight, like cloth, sleep  
snug on someone's hip, brushing past.

13 October 2004  
Hotel Wolcott

=====

Something changes. The long Hellenic line  
of the Post Office stretching far away west  
along Thirty-first street, tucked in  
between new and newer curvilinears.  
Holds. Everything imitates. Even  
if only a circle. I am the one  
who decides here, I, who imitate myself  
shamelessly, the interloper  
into other people's plausible mysteries,  
dulcimer-denying bard in a bevy of muses,  
mean them, mean me, mean you  
till you mean so deep the sky itself  
has no room for all you are.

13 October 2004  
Penn Station

=====

To enter society  
is to imitate other people.  
To flee from it  
is to imitate animals,  
trees, stones.  
Everything  
was here before us.  
And yet there is  
an unknown me  
for me to imitate,  
always the self  
to impersonate  
anew. I write  
the letter backwards  
so it seems to come  
from you. I sign it  
“I love you” to  
make you do.

13 October 2004  
Amtrak

## A PRAISE OF TARA

*/sGrol.ma.la./*

1.

Jersey cliffs Tara above them  
green in the wispy blue and white  
striped autumn air  
green, sixteen, the intensity  
of every maiden in her mien

(maiden means she has never  
lost her center, is still  
the center of everyone, everyone  
comes to her to be found

as to the wooded cliffs above  
the western bank morning comes  
face to face and all the general  
light turns green,

that manner of meaning,  
to give your own color to the world  
is what a maiden does,  
a woman young, her dreams intact.

Green girl, give me your dreams,  
let me dream them in me.  
To see Tara on the morning  
is the initiations, the dew  
empowerment and all her power  
virgins me.

2.

The basic rule  
o Boy & Girl Scouts of the soul  
in this dark woodland trauma  
is to pray.

And you turn into  
whatever you pray to.

Pray hard to her  
to come infest you  
with her purity

infect you with her eternal  
teenage intensity  
of noticing the slightest thing  
and daring to care  
daring to take care  
of everyone

when she smiles you become yourself  
when she slips gently into you  
as a girl slips into a chemise  
she wears you in the street  
you are her clothes, you are the face  
she shows to everyone.  
This is the empowerment of skin.

13 October 2004  
Amtrak, heading north

=====  
Let me hear the hurry instead of do.

The Alpine organizers prepare  
one more acclivity to climb  
constructing out of all they guess  
the sleek grey schist of thy ascent

as they cry to the divinity that rules such jaunts  
*amo quid vincitur*  
almost vertical, ithyphallic mostly,  
condescending to birds along the way,  
staved with stalagmites, at last they cave.

They mount into what has been called  
the empyrean or even (Shelley) the inane –  
certainly the high airless wind-soaked place  
in search of mortal caves to burrow in. Tall.

Rub the crown of the head against the humid nub  
on the way in.

Know the way. Know the place.  
Knowing backwards to the door.

Nothing wood,  
nothing stone anymore. Cloud outside,

hard cloud. Listen to the abstract conversation,  
contours of the winds.

They have come  
and come again to a condition where there are no things,  
only doing. That is what a mountain is.

14 October 2004

## THE DOG

*(after Jonathan Peyster)*

### **The dog walked down the street.**

There are some women at the corner  
smoking in the cold air.

They're on their nico-break from the desk,  
the dog keeps working.

Walking. The patrol  
of an animal –a dog is an animal,  
Socrates a man, both are mortal,  
Socrates is dead, the dog alive,  
the dog is walking– a dog's work  
is endless.

What they are looking for  
never gets there  
though all along the way  
are other lovely things:  
God gives us little destinations  
to make us glad.  
To keep us on the road.

Or make us mad, the Greeks said  
that about their gods,  
fulfilled desire is the end of the road.  
The dog, any dog,  
has no road. The dog has a street.  
A street is what houses happen to a road.

The women happen to the street.  
The dog tries to happen to the women  
but the women shoo him  
though one of them feels sorry.  
The dog is not a cute dog,  
not at all, has that been explained?

The dog is not sorry to be gone,  
the overwhelming smell of cigarette smoke  
confuses him, everything smells the same,  
he is confused too  
by the sound of the voices  
mixing with the smell, the sight  
of their mouths opening and closing  
confuses him too, they look  
exactly like people calling a dog

but they don't want a dog.  
A street is so long. A street  
goes so far. Having said all that,  
it is hard to imagine  
how a dog can ever stop walking  
along the street, how we could ever rightly say  
a dog *walked* when the dog is still  
walking. That is the only story we have left.  
The dog is gone. Only the story  
of what we notice. What we tell.

14 October 2004

=====

Feeding M&Ms to the blind.  
Can they tell?

Or tell me  
why I only want the blue?

14 X 04

=====

not one hero but all of them,  
barons of the empty sea  
between here and hell

they thought was heaven  
they had such rulership therein

because a man never know  
where the next wave rises  
and they heard all their saints

singing some sort of Latin  
far away, like holy seagulls  
and everything gone.

14 October 2004  
Kingston

## AMBER

wet amber,  
trident, Shiva's hand  
raised against despair,,  
sky lucid as rain  
but no rain,  
                  earth wet,  
spill and rigging  
the land is driven  
shipwise to no shore.

The lair. The lady  
(luminous) rests her back  
against the stone  
and looks at him.  
At me. Honest weather,  
the long hidden bodies,  
samite, velvet  
of a cold Renaissance,

a block of stone. Freemason  
(she means me) carve an Image  
we both can pray through  
in the rock,

that's all a woman asks,  
that and pearls, tears, amber.

2.  
Playing catch  
with mortal mind  
he analyzes cusps  
and who lives there

dream kids, low  
riders of East L.A.  
the torque of memory  
in the synagogue of time,

I remember nada.  
Astrology fills you.  
True information  
about imaginary people.

You believe your way  
deeper into the system,  
the Situation. Gnostic  
potentates

squat on your head.  
You taste the residue  
of personality  
and call it your friend.

You are in love with it,  
you live for it, would  
die for it, the image  
fell from your stars.

Starcraft, dealer of men.  
Heart men and Spade men,  
one belongs to one's elements,  
I am phosphorus, I kindle

in mere air, I tremble  
always ready to immerse  
in my own consciousness,  
cold generous flame.

To burn you, to abuse  
the distances between us.  
Over the steeple and under the knee—  
belief did this to us,  
  
atheism cured by touch.

3.  
Skipper silver on the banks of woe,  
down to 7 on the London market  
Troy they call it for it too was burned  
sacked turned to caramel in poetry  
carbon diamond Ottoman ash,  
commas everywhere.

This

is the ash of silver  
as silver is the ash of gold —

didn't anybody tell you  
when the world was made  
that no one made the world?  
We all did it to each other,  
pilgrim consciousness lost in waking.

4.  
I want to be a Turk today  
and bugger everyone in sight,  
want to be a church become a mosque,  
a poem become cliché,  
want to be a narrow strait  
drunk on contradictions,  
a husband torn between two oceans,  
I want to be famous and despised,  
like leprosy, I want to be a rosary

in everybody's hands, amber beads,  
it is not easy to be me,  
tidal waded with wanting,  
disarmed, expensive, indifferent to securing  
the goals so passionately wanted.

5.  
For wanting's all. And getting's nowhere.  
And what you get does nobody good.

Be coarse with me among the pronouns,  
liminal lady, so steely elegant

as if you too were pure magnesium  
blue as weather and nice to the feel.

15 October 2004

=====  
Finding the argument  
is later than answer.

Sullen sun.  
I recall it now  
at a rainy midnight  
exactly.

I live in the country,  
that is the whole story.  
Tomorrow we check out the sheep  
at the wool fair. Rain's best  
for rams, you smell the true  
reek, the wool, the beasts,  
their sheer determination  
to be wholly, merely, there.

Who was I before I came here,  
what did I look like  
before a tree?

Once I could see nothing  
green from my window,  
once I sailed across the sea.

May I explain the martinis,  
the brandy alexanders  
that brought me home,  
the dingy apartment on 12<sup>th</sup>,  
the wholesale meat market  
midnights outside Las Americas  
where you went to buy  
in those days Lorca or Huidobro.

At night the moon was  
over 13<sup>th</sup> Street too,  
the moon always finds me,  
you too, the girls  
coming out of El Faro,

then rain, then no moon,  
bloodstains on the sidewalks,  
steam from the subway vents.  
And then I was gone.

15 October 2004