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S A B B A T H

With Sunday quiet mind stalks his sons
We are born in a river of a place
With morning birds mind calls her daughters
Look up from isms and behold her face.

1 August 1993

Fiercely begin. La Terche hangs over hemlock slopes
in shade at noon I shuddered up the hill.
Drought follows me. I am a pitcher at the well
and water fears my wide application. Appetite.

Bend into peace. As if against a music
only you can hear, your body dances.
Of all the arts I wanted to be that, a dance
let loose in things.

Here in hip or side
a word could speak in perfect sentences.
An animal learns who he is by studying
what feels good to eat. The nourishment.

So also this body, learn what music feeds it.
To be responsible for lust, to answer it myself.

1 August 1993

MIDNIGHT

Ounce of hex to know once them,
bones of wrecks through no wants torn,

bonds a raft to gnaw wet bones,
Mississippi, I ask you! 49.7 feet at morning

a woman said the night before—
we'll see if all the Old Blue Gods were listening.

1 August 1993

GLARE

Straight as the diagonal path across Parker's Piece
(the longest straight line in Christendom)
the sunlight comes shuntering down today.

Over my eyes! I drive by feel!
My hands light up the wheel!

I need a grey all day, morning afternoon and eve:
I need a cloud.

1 August 1993

1.

Love be my witness
I walk up the rain

And there his castle is
Or moony long house

Where they sit around all day and
Whittle dreams they drop on me all night

2.

There at the door
bearing flowers

my lookalike my sister alchemist.

1 August 1993

THREE PLACES

Eleusis

Urge wrecks calm planets—
eyes decide. A lode of tungsten
followed home. Urge work,
retro-suck as parallel to touch:
inhale this biosphere the mind.

Fatal one! Closet footsteps
prank of dread, these deer just
somniaambulists (need a shower)
prancing down stone straight lines
in loud-listening Attika. Crystal,

there is nothing further than the skin.

In Sarawak

Rain knew
how to come
out of the ground

like a princess
long thought sleeping

her disease
precisely mortal
she woke
in human
life a while

with all the giving
a body is
did one

finally receive?

Slumber party
out of control.

Mont Blanc

Then there are these places I have been
—balcony, Arabia, Laramie—
to inhale the actual (as we think).
A place is not just something seen.

Blind men are somewhere too.
A place is heard, breathed in, touched
and more than all of these is close
to the unknown faculty of anywhere,

the exact world you stand up in.
The rest is postcards and easy sentences.
Whereas seeing a picture takes the place away.
Weeks before I first went to Paris I had a dream:

I floated effortless above the Seine and saw.
Saw clear and saw so much that when I got there
I could guide myself by that remembered city
in which I happened now to walk

from Clignancourt to Montparnasse
while a blind man was singing down the empty street.

2 August 1993

INTERCESSION

Queen of gunners
Aim our barrels
Queen of butchers
Whet our knives

Queen of roofers
Trim our shingles
Queen of robbers
Hide the moon.

2 August 1993

THE STRUGGLE

The difference between bird song
and the back-hoe tearing down walls across the road

is birds sing for themselves.
These workers are slaving for others.

Difference between a rose and a pyramid.
Thank god ants don't sing.

3 August 1993

ABAT-JOUR

a motto of d'Annunzio a plea
against the murderous light

impeachment summer
a hope of lampshades
curtained windows stifling
interminable traffic

3 August 1993

BIRD FACTS

An owl mated with the dark
gave birth to blackbirds. The red

epaulets on their wings
mean hardly anything.

A flash of sunlight.
Silently a gun goes off and eggs are laid.

3 August 1993

Last night the full moon
distancing each proper thing

rare over dense woods
a ray of it came down

making everything dimensional
that had just been black.

Stage light, shocking sudden
light from inside the woods.

Space is the shadow of light.

3 August 1993

SONATA FOR EAR TRUMPET

list
ten
tunes
have
some
thing to say

3 August 1993

BLACK PEPPER

all I can say is
treat the rapper
right, the night
is coming when the words
won't work, won't
lift against the head
a rap of sense
to lead against the tune

Orpheus will get his rocks to dance
all right and we will all be
Eurydices shuddering in hell
and call our shivers music.

3 August 1993

What is a word?
A word is enough.

4 August 1993

BY THE WEIR

Listen manfully to the water
slang will last an hour
you know there is a beaver in this water
whose lodge is as the far end of the pond
—snow melts on it from his inner warmth—
that's how you tell— you think you know this
you think you have read the signs aright
that when all this water is finished with its work
there will still be land under everything
water is an accident almost a shadow of some grace
or merit we forgot and that will presently
run out and women die in Bosnia tonight.

4 August 1993

One ray of the new sun finds
a way through undergrowth to the far
side of the clear plastic feeder. The word *isinglass*
arises in the mind. Unperturbed
by either arrival, finches feed.

5 August 1993

MEASUREMENTS ONLY APPARENT

The blade-edge — and the earth resists—
breaks. Auger. Nature abhors fences.
Yet we. The principle of the thing,

that this place is sacred, hence bounded
to focus boundlessness down on us,
to be here. The marriage.

And if gold, and control, and was able,
and could see in the dark, down there,
where the auger screws through rubble,

what glaciers leave, and some soil,
and could see what the rocks see,
sight box, the eye looks at itself.

We read our minds. Cartoon
of a dog doing it. We flee the boundless
into the company of men. At four a.m.

blue neon snoozes. At this signal
—which is no sign, or a *no* sign—
the population eases to the dark.

Return to your measured places. Houses.
They all sleep, sleep is alkahest,
the universal solvent. We wake by inches.

5 August 1993

DESIRE

I have not like sum.
Rescind me, father of lies.
Hereafter nothing but true
And want is never.

Desire is by its nature false,
Because contrary-to-fact,
It wants what is not the case.

If desire then is suppositious
(Or superimposition) then
What would it be like to look at
What is the case,

without the prejudice of desire?
Something truer than I know.

2.

Or there could be a truth in desire,
A doing-less appetency? As if
Desire is one domain and Doing
Is another. And the truth of desire
Exactly that it permits the desirer
To estimate the distance between
Himself and what is the case?

Looking across the border at the actual
Is also actual.

6 August 1993

As much as we hoped for better
worse arrived
and took the form of an arrow
bothering a bird

Hitless he flew
and the arrow skidded along a branch
and may still be there
waiting for Irishmen

waiting for all I know
for a Japanese court lady
to look up from her diary
and compare it to something

squinting as she does so
delicately over her swift brush
until she gets it right.
What will she say it's like?

6 August 1993

