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THE BRUNO PROJECT

Assume
the ads are the real news.

History of my America exclusively
from ads in the Times and the Daily News.

Ignore the things that are happening
and concentrate on the images
meant to construct our identities
as consumers, believers,

citizens
we may find there’s no history at all.

27 December 2009
Drop in—

a lovely word

(arrive = to reach a river bank
drop in = to come down from heaven)

Praise God for metaphors above all
ey they can turn stones into bread.

27 December 2009
SNOW

good day for the Lares
the Domovoi
the children
squealing to no school

to consult
the delicate
structures of our liberty

as if this day
will be the only one
at all,
luminous, pallid,
old dust of heaven
making us new
before some somber
afternoon of sunshine comes
to mortify our own
quiet light
into responsibility.

Gods give such journeys
a day is.
2.
But there are no children
on this street,
I stand alone
armed to the teeth,
impaling snowflakes
one by one
a lonesome musketeer
trying to be at home
for the sky is here.
that’s what all this means,
a terrible atonement has ensued
and we are rapt
in the original chill of Paradise—
no we, just me
aforesaid,
watching pretty snow
sift down on pretty parks.

3.
Now find an answer for your answers
now solve the multiplex identities
ill-concealed by your pronoun *me*,
you know you’re me
when you read this.
I have discovered your secret,
you plead guilty
to all my sins.

Language is like that—
the road is black rubber
everything else is white.

28 December 2009
Is there a water that evaporates less slowly than water?
Chambers full of air that rise through the air?
Pockets full of quiet fire?

We’ve lost the face of love, only the torso is left—
we build our conception of culture on the guesswork of trying to reckon what that face was like.
And whose face it is.

28 December 2009
Overweight at the doctor’s office
underweight at home.
C’est la vie d’un homme sérieux,
a well-dressed importer of mountains from the Grisons.

28 December 2009
While I’ve been writing about it
the snow is dwindling.
Is there a moral here,
description is banishment?
Kafka’s careful delineation of
his Odradek apotropaic?

28 December 2009
At last he had time
to look at the sky.
And the sky looked back.
A secret understanding
between them formed,
dissolved, then fixed
in place again. This
was only themselves.
Timeless information.
Even if he worried,
it said, he could find this
inside the worry.
He doesn’t even need time
to do it. But he had time.
The sky was very close now
he could feel its breath
on his face, almost he thought
their two breaths were mingling,
that would be strange.
Sharply he inhaled, took in
what he could of that far breath.
Now he had something he could
say, later, if needed, if anyone asked.
He could say This is what the sky
would say, then say it.

28 December 2009
== == ==

How strange to go to the park,
the park should come to us.
The park should always be here
where we need it, be a part of us.
Or we are just a busy part of it?

28 December 2009
THE DEATH OF SHAKESPEARE

People think he went out turbulent half-drunk and raving, surrounded by all the creatures that he’d given voice to and to the world, Hamlet tragically dithering around his bed, Viola primping in some borrowed jeans, Othello staring at his useless hands. Not so. Shakespeare stood up not drunk at all, clear-headed, morning, and walked outside down the street and through some trees that stood there waiting for him hundreds of years. He thought of how empty the woods were, nobody around. He had used all the people up, characters they called them, persons is the word he liked, persons in a play no different from just another part of this. Nobody around me, inside or out, he thought, nobody to talk for, or make another see. Or be. Just trees and me. He knelt down then, not to pray,
just to be closer to the ground,
eyes grow dimmer as the heart
grows keener, he saw small
mushrooms, a beetle, a leaf.
What kind of leaf is this
he thought, and realized
at last I do not have to know.
This is where the names
all end and I begin, he thought.
They found him there and with
some mixture of grief and
irritation brought him home.

28 December 2009
THE WORK OF THE MONASTERY

One of the things we do
is protect the valley from natural
and most man-made disasters.

The former more reliable
because the earth gods are more rational
by and large than human mortals

more alert with intelligent self-interest
and the obligations of guest-friendship—
we walk around in their house

and if we behave correctly
the gods are peaceful with us
and the earth sleeps well,

dreams good crops for us
pure water from the sky and the rock,
lets us lie down and think

undisturbed all the images we love to mind.

29 December 2009
COSMIC EVENT

Asking and not asking
getting and not getting
staying home and going there
she answers the phone she
answers she is alone.

29.XII.09
SAMSON

1.
Samson sits down to analyze his situation.
Strength without wisdom? No.
Marrying out of the tribe? Maybe.
Marrying at all? Yes. The mistake.
Desiring the other? Yes, yes. Mistake.

2.
I am the first homosexual, he reasons,
I must be my own other.
I must love what is my own.

I am an alterity animal
and I have tried in vain to be a normal man
and trying to keep norm destroyed me,

she cut off the long tresses of my difference
because I was woman because I was the Sun
she makes me moon she takes my light away

and I pay for my strange husbandry now
by consort ing with oxen and other slaves.
Sometimes they are compassionate and let me sit
and reflect, so clear my thought, my blindness
keeps my mind on my mind
which exposed to brightness is antic too much.

So I will use my notable strength surviving,
reviving, in inmost observation. I learn
to welcome this horrid darkness as a new gender of light.

3.
They are not harsh, by their strange blonde lights I remember all too well unfolding in her tresses. Somehow I do not want to use the word ‘hair.’ They treat me as well as they would treat one of their own, given equal fear. They even talk about making me a citizen, granting me the same rights they grant themselves, paltry as they are. That would include the right to laugh at me in the same way that we all – openly or covertly – laugh at our fellow citizens. Normal citizens survive by ridiculing one another. Me they would mock for being blind, for having lost my strength in the lap of my Irish whore. And for something more I’ve never really figured out – is it my race, dark and circumcised, or is something else, something they read in me that I can’t read in myself, a radical fault, a folly built in?

One way or another they’ll ridicule me and I’ll let them. I won’t skulk or act resentment. Then, at a certain moment (the one that French prisoners around me call \textit{the willed moment}) I will calmly stand up and tear down their society, destroy the underpinnings of their commonwealth. I’ll spread their
columns wide and make them gay. Violate their terrible normality that makes me shudder as I lie here in straw and try to sleep.

They are Celts and hate mockery more than flesh wounds, so I will mock them, and out of my inward vision I will lampoon each of their pale flat faces and their flabby hams, I will laugh in public at them, speak sardonic masterpieces of prophetic jive in the cackling Hebrew they’ll never learn, then I’ll tell them in their own slushy language that even the blind can see their foolishness, and even this chained prisoner, mind at rest, is more free than they can ever be, slaves as they are to their ridiculous fishy gods and slippery customs.

I am a man alone
married only to myself
my private sun in my own sky.

Their society will crumble from mockery,
exposed to the light of my darkness
it will shrivel and rot and be gone.
Exiles, they will be sad westerlings forever,
no home but their own bodies.
I will pull down their city without touching a stone.

29 December 2009
No one guesses other
always same. Some
rise like weather
or rive like wind.
Body is a strange trick.
Cloth stained by soul.
Nights you wrap
me in your shroud.

29 December 2009
OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. Am I here to account for something some monkey did, lofted a coconut and dropped it on a parson’s head,

nature is naturally anti-clerical since clergymen destroy religion and nature is naturally religious.

Nature I’m trying to tell you speaks French better far than I can, and though long ago I had a decent what they now call slider

then a fast low curveball I am no monkey, every coconut is safe with me and I will never climb a single tree.

2. Read this as a confession of sorts.
I am What Is Wrong With This Picture.
Time will take care of that but till then
(but I thought time was always now?  
time is *then*? Then when are we?  
And when is now?) I try to pass

unnoticed among the citizens
by talking at the top of my voice
and waving my arms in the air

like local weather. And just like
weather, everybody talks
about me and nobody understands.

3.  
When the tiger mislays his forest
he is a shabby beast, a danger, yes,
but one that everyone will kill on sight
automatically. Yet how great
to be one of those, beautiful,
colorful strong, everybody’s enemy!

29 December 2009