7-2007

julE2007

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I’m not sure there’s any way to be a hand
unless you are one

five stalks of bamboo
up out of a bronze water bowl

trying to remember
something somebody else used to know how to do.

19 July 2007
MEASURE

Measure is itself a mushroom,
wallpaper paste you soak off and eat
famine food, measure
itself is a girl crying.

a gate flapping in the wind.

19 July 2007
Put the right images together:

Altiplano. A pal from Peru.

But the windowscreens are soaking
but the rain has dried.

But the sun has set.
But we’re still here.

Of course it seems as if the feet
themselves made the body move.

But what would I know,
I for whom a cloud
walking past sunrise is dance enough.

19 July 2007
When you begin writing a word
you predict the future,
that cam will turn into came into camel
and they all happen
and the paths divide forever.
I'll try again. When you write any word
you predict it, your intention
is previous to its inscription
common sense says. Is that true?
Or even so? When you begin
writing a word anything can happen.
The camel can pass your crooked door.
You can forget everything
you thought you meant and go follow it
where such things go.

20 July 2007
This dictionary
picks me to live

with it. By mere
beast you shine.

Your sheen.
This comes

closest yet.

20 July 2007

for Grace Leavitt
Suppose this cushioned davenport’s advantage
enfeoffed anxious teenage lovers who
know everything that love knows how to teach,
put out the light and do as you please.

Here lie they down. Here awkward they align
horizontal gumptions in the vertical array.
Here push they or pull. A little miracle each time
like a rabbit freezing on the sunny lawn because a shadow.

I am the shadow. I am the awful one.
a little like a wall
a little like a mockingbird
who sees all. Who remembers all too well.

20 July 2007
Red Hook
Who are these who glue themselves to me
their ineffaceable images why?
There are some flowers don’t tolerate the sun.
Am I one? Or they hide themselves in me?

These mild autistic women!
The strange zombie ailment of autism
indifference to the other until
even the own is other and stops feeling.

Poor child, to be trapped in a world without me.

21 July 2007
So little here to understand.
I should take my basket of eggs
and hide under the bridge
until I hear the fox’s faint footsteps
pass overhead, pause, and then be gone.
Now I am safe from the images.

What is an image?
An image is the knife tip broken off in the wound.

21 July 2007
1. I have written my bone dry—
can you make an opera out of that?

2. No one knows how much his body,
his very body, may mean to another person.

3. So much cruelty in the world
and all of it comes from not knowing one’s own infinite worth.

4. Learn to love yourself,
no one who prizes himself would ever do harm.

21 July 2007
LOST AND BE

glad on it
it’s all in the hands
the skin work
the honey
on the hands
so the boat of us goes, imposing,
do you hear,
who?

All in the hands hurry—
studying the philtrums on foreign faces—
this tells
but who, what what
the eyes listen,
time spatters.
They call it canvas
this thing they paint on
it is a garment
to wrap around space and walk through
time with it so different from a wall

though thou art painted as a wall,
Egypt had to put the building on
endure stone’s sense of time—
all you bring is your space skin,

imposing it on spaciousness,

this shrivel of a me
being here
and yet the only

2.
You didn’t like the man I can’t blame you
you hardly even saw his face he’d let you
only through the telescope of fear

my god

his eyes were a phonecall in the night.
Sick in me
despite the weather’s
health the gold
afternoon not lost
because the air,

not much of me
is sick,
the rapt radio
of my attention

cows spilling
from the cattlecar
all we need
is expanse

acreage of actual
skin our largest
organ or
under the apple tree

we are a sinuous
interruption
a moment of being
conscious then not

I’ll teach you what the tree taught me.

22 July 2007
COULD EDEN EVEN BE?

1.
When my heart’s in the right place I’ll have a habit
till then too many came in too few went out
and not one unchanged

Was it the walls, enmuraled elegance all frit and glze
or was it the doorways basalt-jambed, alabaster transomed
to scare the daylight out as you went in,

suck light

or was it the greenery, the fruit and ferns
and all of it whispering Eat me?

Eat me as if I come into myself, my own
only when swallowed by another,

l’âme engloutie,

that dismal little operetta?

Am I my own yet
or would even want to be?

2.
He did. That was the trouble,
he consented prematurely
to his identity.

If there was a trouble,
of course,

if there were ever anything but
the interminable sea interrupted by
interminable landscapes.

That he consented to be
something bigger than he.
Wind left him lots of space to move around in
but who could see it, who could see
the vast savannahs of his desperation,
his feints and follies out to the neighborhood horizon
and who knew?
Carl Sauer on the steppe said it,
vulgar as it is to say it

grasslands are the limit of a man.

22 July 2007
PYTHAGORAS

But could it be me,
apple or evening, voice
trailing after a shade?

All the conspiracies
lead to the same place,
a little man sitting in a little room
wishing he were other than he is.

Everybody guesses, nobody knows.

The secret history of the world
is the history of its secrets,
the chronicles of all the explanations,
all the guesses, all the sensual suspicions

all the theories that finally prove
nothing but our need to theorize.

I killed Lincoln. I killed Kennedy.
I carried Arthur to the lake.

Spirit wants us to think there’s more than what we see.

22 July 2007
I see him vaguely
in the glass: globe
not necessary, any
mirror shows the future—
you don’t think you look
like that already, do you?

22 VII 07
CONSEQUENCES

The detectives are waiting,
you have a statement,
try to believe what you’ll say.

The rough-hewn stone
of the police station is strangely
like the Vienna opera house,
weep for all the human crimes—

that world will never come again.

The innocent lusts of men long
dead sound like music. Buildings
are the shadows of people’s lives—
some real, some imaginary—
those who lived or worked in them,

a city is a zoo of shadows.
And that’s the thing I really love,
you can always trust a shadow.

22 July 2007
So much depends upon
the color of the ink,
eleven lines to say I love you,

a phrase not available in French
for all the ink in China,
the army is a disgrace

can’t capture even one chateau,
desire, where you take shelter,
they plod up the ravelin

abashed by your arrows,
all my force in vacuous panoply displayed.

23 July 2007
That cloud is up to something
that little one darker than the rest
with a face like a trout
nosing those distant waters
beneath which I and mine
perpend deliciously in summer’s
last will and oxygen
I love this little world light gave us
be careful how many things you look at
you’ll have to see them all again
when the girl on the tiger finally takes off the sky.

23 July 2007
Hen deck?
A syllable’s
enough for me:
me, that egg,
that preposterous
certainty wrapped
with insecurity,
fragility, Saint
Martin’s cloak
this beggar
saved from winter.