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I’m going around the world now
collecting traces of me
from all the minds
I don’t want to hold me

I don’t know much about me.

When I have taken myself
out of all the minds that ever
knew me, held me,
there still is music left.

Music that no one alive seems
to know how to find. *Trobar,*
to fit
    words into silence
so their absence makes a shape,
a sound even,
     where once someone was.

21 April 2006
And after you turn the dream
into something else
what is left of the cathedral spire
the plaza, the Graben,
all the musical people
pretending to be the color of their clothes?

What is left of the air
when the birds have gotten finished with it?

and all those sermons
the stones had to sit through
hundreds of years
as the language changed and changed
but they did not,

why don’t we listen to the stones?

22 April 2006
Hear that stone again
the one that loves me
as no woman can

no wonder Wolf my friend
made it the one
came down from before heaven
to marry me

o Wolf
you ran among the money men
the greasy barons and you loved
the sound of words and knew
that words are blind,
blind as stone, dear
friend you gave me a stone
came down from before
there was time, before
the sun was a ram.

You never saw it,
I hear it clearly
a string plucked –
bow-string, lute-string
no man can tell,
a word is blind
and lingers in your hand,

you never saw it, the one you meant,
the all-around the far of us,
the sea, the sea
is what’s left of God’s crown
fallen around us,

surrounds us.

23 April 2006
WAITING FOR THE OTHER

Waiting for the other side of the other
to show up, one looks in a mirror.
People used to call it a looking-glass
as if the point of it was to look
instead of all our busy seeing
or as if that were the only place, face
one really was allowed to look at,
hard, soft, as long as was desired.

And then, having looked at that a long
long time, lifetimes maybe in that minute,
one could look again to that other place
they call away, and one could see.

23 April 2006
CHATOYANT

Under the wrong stand
or sun. The blocked
necessity is like a tiger’s eye
stone in grass the haunted
sestina on the little hill.
We heard Andalusian
praying. Prayer is the wrong word—
saying it turns right.
The pebbles in the very brook
blaspheme the water
a crime knows how to shine.
God save the sinner. Summer.

24 April 2006
Isn’t it time now
to be another?
His clothes my clothes,
his skin my new road?

I feel my way along
another name.
It feels all different
to step up on a bus,

to see my hand
sticking out of a grey cuff
of a business suit,
taste his spearmint
gum in my mouth.

24 April 2006
Aberwackie the town the come from
to haunt me with dead languages
and all I want to do is probe their tongues
tangling with my tongue, wordlessly talking
better nor no Welsh nor English never do.

24 April 2006
PLACE BY THE RIVER

The river happens holy,
has name. The place
has fire, woods, clearing,
men. An island it could
but that doesn’t matter.

Every place we can see
is an island. Bounded
by the sea of unseen.
And from that somber flood
interminable Vikings harry in.

24 April 2006
I bless myself and close my eyes
a child again
in this mature theology
all the words in place
the heart goes to sleep still hungry.

24 April 2006
her steps were
  trembling harp
  alone on the hill
  descend the soul
tale was long but lovely

* 

fall I may bend thy red eye
will not hear remain
the youth the war my love
half-worn song

* 

I saw his sails
like the full-orbed moon
deer and return no more

* 

locks of age
lovely the remnant
lay in night resounds
not the joyous shells
* 

it was the years
the clouds have

* 

of gems they stretch the moon

* 

of troubled streams
dark stream between
daughter

no Gods in the story

rolling stars
bossy stone in memory of the future

* [24 IV 06]

he felt it with his breast and his down
like the harp is faint
in the hall of his voice

Listen! a green narrow morning returned with his hands!
the wound will die in their youth
no time to fill the shell
darkening designed

sea-borne peace is not its voice he went
lake of sounding
roes
from their place
but where are my friends?

darkened moon
tomorrow spread
break the echoing

when in a whirlwind
hand not closed in darkness
burning
that sunbeam!
far off we saw
loose dark hair
behind their sheets

it is the house of strangers

*
THE BRIDGE NEAR ZAMOREK

The male voice said: “On the 29th of May, 1904, on the western approaches to the Zamorek Bridge, two cars collided. One, slightly damaged, proceeded on its way to Zamorek without further incident. The other, in which I was, toppled down the embankment into the river, where I drowned. Please read me all the information you can find about this incident, including all the auditorium reports.” I understood the word auditorium as the speaker’s mistranslation of a word that means forensic. At the next opportunity, I went to the relevant section of the archives and began assembling the reports requested. As I was lifting the files onto the desk, my telephone rang. An official voice said that a Permissions Command had just been issued by the central office, expressly forbidding all research into the very case with which I was busy at the moment…

(At this moment the voice of the archivist ceased, and I woke up, anxious to transcribe the information the dream had recounted, as I have just done.)

25 April 2006
Unless they were closer they began
a smaller compact woodpecker
Mars’ cap on his head success at seed
the profligate dove also white
underwings attends a flurry
smell of lilies.

25 April 2006
AGAINST THE CURRENT

The raft is full, darling,
with just the two of you
counting me as an access
or reflex of your skin. You shine.
The raft pulls against the current,
who? Is there a cantilever
built inside, the art of water?
Go where we want forever!
Into the little cannulae up the green
so as we push through heavy trees
something pushes into us, simultaneous fuck the Old Ones call it
in their ancient speech lost so
long ago we have to talk with our
hands to say anything at all.
Massage the hip bone more,
rub it till it gleams above that
waistband of your shattered
underwear. We are lost.
Off the big river among all the
nameless aftermath of love,
other people, sketchy music,
a burnt-out town. Nameless,
Nameless, tell me your name,
I’ll give you all my yams
and heap them in your lap
o Christ my clueless skin,
this leprosy of touch, why
doesn’t the sky get sick of us
and snuff us out the way it does
the sun. Fighting our way
up the endless rivers of the other,
feathers stuck to our skin
and only you know why.

25 April 2006
The filled pen
remembers all the words
you didn’t say.
Desert talk, a word
goes far. Silence
further. Blue shadows.

25 April 2006
HAGIA SOPHIA

Will I remember this in time
the way the gold mosaic
remembers the empress’s bare breast
reflected in its divinizing glaze?

25 April 2006