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RAIN

There may have come a touch of rain
it may have been when we least understood
and later the evidence dried,

light stains on the sky.

We lived through those days in constant denial
of what we see. Seem. It told us
(all told us) what we had no wish to reflect,

old letters, scat of feral animals
in our little woods, dead for all we know,

certainly we don't hear them growling anymore
in the night. Just as we didn't feel the rain.

21 July 2006
MANHATTAN REVELATIONS

1.
Soon someone will come
and then it will change.
All the room for revision
will be taken away.
They close the sky.

2.
In elevators all over Manhattan
women wait, uneasy,
when will the familiar lurch
lift or lower them
to their next imposture?
And why do they keep up this masquerade?
Why don’t they show us who they really are?

3.
If only the propositional
comes to excite?
Can’t you listen and make love to the places in between,
not the pirates but the whole Caribbean?

21 July 2006
ON THE DAY 13 SINNER

So much the sinner
the scape the run
into the woods the red
the sign of number raised
embrowed with crimson

army, for David counted,
taxed, and sinned the kingdom.

The first sin is to count.
The leaves of Eden
numberlessly fell
till scoundrel Adam
picked one up,
One, he said, let this be one
and veiled with cock with it –

for number hides.

Eve went
“wailing,” horrified by this hiding
as he had loved what had been hid

and found Sir Serpent ever truthful telling
I will give you fruit to eat
tasting it you will taste
the real world beyond the numbers
where nothing’s hid,
sensual and supersensual at once,
the living meat of the abstract,
the cock of God.

And Mind closed round her as she ate.
And she knew.

2.
Mind held
Eve hard in hand.
Mind knew
itself in her
awake anew.
Eve always
awake. *Adam*
means ‘sleep:’
the red glow
you see when you
close your eyes
in sunshine, not
the ‘red-clay-man’
but a man made
from color alone

by her, the master
language maker,
Hevah, mother
of all being.

3.
Adam stirred.

His fingers closed
around her ankle
as she stood above him.

Her astragalus
firm in his palm
erased the deep lines
left there from another life.

A life before Creation
which was all being
and nothing made.

Adam’s new smooth palm,
the past erased, this is what
the theologians call
*Making Man in the Image of God*

(but theologians are strange old men
who think that Eve was just some man)

but she said: your smooth skin means
you have no fate but the words I tell you.
4.
And she knew
knew how to teach

us to use
the ramparts of a silly book
as a stairs
to reach out and touch her hair

above the lonely order of the world.

22 July 2006
SEAS

Vanes of a pen’s nib
fins of a shark.

22 VII 06
POMPEY'S CAVE

In Pompey's Cave a stream
runs below a stream.
Sometimes at low water in the upper
you spot the hole, the ladder
leads down to the lower

German fairytale, blue light
beneath the earth that leads
all us poor old soldiers, and we are,
we all are, down along
fleeing from the witch of war,

the lower is always in spate,
runs hard into and out of the rock wall.
Pompey they say was a slave,
he hid they say in the cave below
through which the purifying channel ran.
Two streams in one.
Freedom deep inside the slave,
a slave inside a man.

22 July 2006
It is midnight
the branches
fall from the trees
leaving the leaves
intact, in position,
green intersections
only, barely there
but there.

It is not midnight,
the branches lie
scattered on the lawn.
Through healthy leaves
cameo appearance of
the dying moon.
When she shows
it is not raining.

And it almost really is.

22 July 2006
I have a key that unlocks silence
I hide it in the back of my head
near a cloister in the mountains
where the stone is always talking

*stone knows how*

and that is the first thing I ever remembered.

23 July 2006
A DAY WHEN NEATNESS COUNTS

It's been years since I've been in this kind of place, she kneels down with that notable gap between her front teeth – Chaucer said goat-toothed or gate-toothed, I can't remember – dentists declare diastema – anyhow they glowed in the dark of our mutual intentions. Lay the Seven of Hearts on the Eight of Clubs, you know the rule. When I was young I too wanted to be a doctor, just for the books and the bodies, it wasn’t clear I actually wanted to help people, but why not, sickness is a way of conversation, I knew that already, well before Sunday and I was only born Tuesday. I think there’s music playing but I can’t be sure, the imago before me overwhelms my meager senses and I fall into concentration, why my betters used to call a ‘brown study’ and I chose it and choose it again and smile disarmingly at the pretty lady.

23 July 2006
Is that my name
this thing I can't pronounce?

23 VII 06
calling for certainties
is waiting at the church,
marry me is his tune
and every passing hearse
pauses so that the corpse
might listen. For we too
are affianced to the dead,
their tired words our love songs
that explain the world to us
and make us almost confident
we have a place in it.
Language makes us
members of the club –
but not him, the one who waits
on the other side of language,
the blue outsider who has
only one phrase left, marry
me, marry me – we think
he’s one of us and hurry past.
But he is not. But his day will come.

24 July 2006
Eventually things do get around
to being themselves. O what a day
that will be, Martha, when we all
live up to our names, even our middle ones,
and apples are really legitimate to eat
and shiny Oldsmobiles come to life again
because a word gets wet on an old man's tongue.
It will come, Martha, keep the faith,
the sun is like a diamond ring, my dear,
and we make up the finger for it, all of us,
and just wait till you see the whole hand.

24 July 2006
but there are things missing:

his broadsword swung
nimbly near some head
not hitting it,

the leaf
knows how to fall and the tree
lives,

the shadow
knows how to come back
and stand beside its woman

that was a world once but now only is.

25 July 2006
COMMITMENTS

Let the rain decide
it is not raining
my business is the proposition

⋆

truth is up to you

⋆

and then the day passed
its labors, its constructions,
confusions, effusions.
And silence. Silence now.
Silence me.

⋆

I wonder what sort of person
I have become. A number.
A bowl with things floating in it.
A glance, directed at or away from
a remembered face. It goes
both ways. I love you like an other.

⋆

There are spirits here.
They show up as foxes
if you turn a camera on them
in the trees. But they are not foxes.

⋆
They sound like owls over an empty highway
but there is no road

There is something so tired in me now
something like the wrong day of the week
lodged in my throat like the reminder
of some food I tasted once and liked.

But I am not hungry, what a strange
confession, how can I be alive beyond
appetite? A lake, a woman swimming,
white bathing suit, pine trees,
a cat asleep, the wind just beginning.

25 July 2006
Only first thing in the morning
am I permitted to look into the future
and set a number on what I find

not find, some days I can discern
the number of Nothing itself out there
waiting for me to enter it also

into my interminable calculations.

26 July 2006
Have I finished
what I began?
Have I even begun it
darling a hope

in a hand like
some dumb
kind of rose
offered no matter

a thing is worth
only to give
quickly even deftly
to another

past hope it helps.

26 July 2006
The target follows you.
Hit me it keeps telling you,
*fais moi mal* it says
like the Boris Vian song
Magali used to sing,
she’s still alive, time
did it to her, hit her,
does it to us, the target
pinned to your back
you can’t shrug it off
I saw it the second time
we met, we were together
but I would not kill,
the only arrow I know
points to a word in the text,
an immense scripture
I am always reading,
the point of it despite
its shape, shape of a hand
pointing, is to signify
not to wound, except
the terrible wound of meaning.

26 July 2006
These days I have a taste for hunger. After so many years of eating to feel the other side of that, the inner waiting, turns slowly into not waiting, just resting, just the inside of a moving system.

And all the tastes of it! The difference between the hunger for cheese say and the hunger for meat, the hunger for a piece of warm bread or the hunger for a bowl of yogurt with plump Jersey blueberries sweating under sugar. The hungers are as different as the foods, and it is time I came to know them, the feeling of feeling, hunger not a question, just a kind of music of its own.

26 VII 06