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FIRST DANCE

Names of assassins names of songbirds
cure us. Inveterate caravans arrive
mysterious lost salt. Kalahari
touches you on the collarbone
so the whole body shivers. Terpsichore
is your body. Someone indicted
someone indicated someone
will never touch someone else again
and the beast plods on. Marrow cache,
the life is in the bone. Constantine
saw a crisis in the sky, beauty
conquers us he thought and fell
below his knees like any moorhen
plashing. Heath. Rabbit. Sand
in one’s toes sand under one’s nails
the groins of sorry and a kingdom
vaguely hereabouts. Turret, no names

29 October 2005
No more propositions
is a proposition.
No more sentences is a sentence.
We are stuck.
Sticks stick together.
Thread loops. Knots
happen. Meaning arrives.
Alas. How can I be quiet?
How can I be?

29 October 2005
Absence of solids is not liquid.
A camera with no battery
is not the same as a man
willing to see a thing only once.
Let the world take care of itself.
Take care of you – that’s my business.
That’s the job I went to school every
night for twenty years to dream to do.

29 October 2005
SECOND DANCE

Deep valley
they say the lights
are always coming back
itself they say
there is never a shadow
you can’t walk right through

Someone always left
to dream, the strange
smoker’s meditation
of businessmen in doorways
ankled by the cold wind.
They do their breathing.
They notice everything
and nothing stops.

In India this is a festival.
The crows come down for dinner,
the dogs get a moment of respect.
And then the light changes.
The cigarette goes out.
The shadow begins to answer.

. . . 29 October 2005 (31 October 2005)
THIRD DANCE

Still feel the blind torment of
don’t see what’s in front of face
trying to invent a mind life
in the other so they behave
in such wise as to be understood
by the party of the first part
that scientist lover projector
wretch all love and no liberty
like a deck of cards always
trying to tell a different story
but no way to dethrone
that hierarchy those four
elements of that infatuation
men call ‘the world’ and
women do not care to name.

30 October 2005
Suddenly he was trapped
he was saying what he thought.
That’s not what the mind is for.
The mind is all for sing sang sung
not explaining not complaining.
Music is its own explanation
and complaint. It passes through
your whole thinking, he was trapped
in what we wanted to happen next.
The future is the strangest prison,
he’ll never get out of tomorrow.
So the body has to do it for him,
picks up a leaf and chews a lot on it
till the weird innocuous taste
takes thoughts away and leaves
him just with the taste in his mouth
hence free to move around
the little blocks of silence here and there
like a child building a castle
out of sensible interruptions alone.

30 October 2005
FOURTH DANCE

Music not for listening
intercept the air—
catch sound in mirrors
so shape it
a message across room
where some she attends
the gorgeous fake-book
the light writes down for
you and only you to
give her by passing
auto window hurry
tail light light you
speak without listening
till she feels feeling.

30 October 2005
FIFTH DANCE

A knife with wet hair
and a hat or a had
not to be near to hear.
You think what water things.
Mark me Connecticut
no kind of river but a kind of
sea flowing between lands
quick, breads on aching tables,
the table drinks the milk
the hero pours, for love
is heightened unconsciousness,
love is no one’s science
logic of transparent afternoons.

30 October 2005
I couldn’t hear anything he said. His name for instance. Just some geese passing overhead. Just the names of other people we both knew, better known than we, less prone to that obscurity that veiled us even from each other, even now, or then, two men after an event determining what it had meant for me. For him. Just the names of other people as if we were only who we knew and nobody is anybody at all just a sound in someone else’s mouth even a goose minding its own business a furlong above on its own affairs hurrying south for winter can wipe out.

31 October 2005
SIXTH DANCE

But the hair is wet
but the wolf outside
the hat dirty from falling in the road
the drumskin has a hole in it
but the sound still plays sort of
but the socks are ragged
men stuff wool scraps round their toes
the benches are made from old tombstones
we sleep on these
they sit on names
the wind is wet so they forget Portugal
it is a long time
they are arguing with wet hair
about how women smell
some say women smell like milk
others say they smell like honey
some say it depends
and the hair is just as wet as before
no amount of arguing dries the sky
what does you skin smell like
one wants to know and the other
refuses to answer though some answers
come ready to his mind (cardamom
motor oil the smell of lightbulbs
when they just burn out)
but the wind keeps being wet
and no one dares to discuss it
silence is such a powerful argument
even the wolf runs away.

31 October 2005
Accurate as arbalest.
Or addicted to the truth
like an uncomfortable monk
say or a lawyer of causes.
We are many-man the lost
as seen on black and white TV
long after midnight, making do.
A skill that winter teaches
o I know you, the stork
flies away with the baby
your long legs dangle in pale sky.

31 October 2005
Still of night
steel of sight
last moon
I touch tonight.

31 October 2005
SELENE

her torch
in dens of
history light
up again
Hannibal
his face

Cleopatra’s breast.

31 X 05
Pay the architect
then let the wind and light
shape your preposterous cathedral—

we need a little house
for a little man
no bigger than the woods he lives in

no bigger than the sea.

31 October 2005
PEDIATRIC EXCHANGE

My baby for your
straight up. The child
will never know.
Any more than we
do now – it happened
to every one of us
but only the Unhappy Few
remember. The gold
gate slamming.
The taste of milk.

31 October 2005
SOMATOMAT

Where all we can do
is exchange bodies.

Mine for yours, even
steven. In winter
it is easier.
We forget often
what we have bodies for.

If ever we knew.
Maybe just to make
peculiar shadows
on the ground
for the spirits
of the air to see

watch, bet on, fall
in love with once or twice
the way a man could
fall in love with
some other man’s idea.

31 October 2005
And wonder if this too
could speak its peace:
a shining sinner for a father,
a heart constrained
with liquid seeking –
*Mawors* they call him here
a glad god and too eager
as love in other climates comes
hope-heavy on trembling limbs.

31 October 2005
Authorize a translation:
a woman’s at the door.
Ask her in – cider
with cinnamon, a map
spread out on her lap
to show her the stars
among which she has come.
Here – our world is this one,
where the pinhole is,
light shines through it
from the fireplace,
come warm with me
there, here, this
is all that’s left of the sun.

31 October 2005
A room full of harps
and the wind locked out.
Doors, darling, lead
only to other doors.

31 X 05