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PRAYER TO THE ST MARY MAGDALEN OF RENNES-LE-CHATEAU

Like an ace in the fire
asking control

they like the pain
until it hurts

and who are you then,
Magdalen?

you have *introduced*
so much of you

into my *story*
as if at last

I am only a quotation
from you

as I speak myself
into the lives

around me, the emanated
*forms* of archetypal love
using the seven of flames
that rules the sky

*right overhead* and the six
of pentitents, nude

bearing skin-deep wounds
and the Five of Insects

hovers near
yellow my tabernacles

because of you
I can prove the earth

exactly equal to my desires
like a long-sought

far-fetched proof
in mathematics

there in our minds
all the time.

4 June 2003
AFTER

People don’t die, you know, 
the translation is otherwise, 
is a kind of vocation or call 
you hear and leave the room 
to understand more clearly 
what nobody is saying, turns out 
to be your own voice from the beginning 
of time, whenever that is, you hear 
again now and almost this time 
you understand. But by that time 
it feels too late to go back inside, 
life is so embarrassing, they 
will have forgotten you anyhow 
by now, in the conversation, by now 
you are ready to forget them too, 
along with this recent self 
and concentrate instead if you can 
it’s so noisy out there, on all the words 
you intended in the first place 
when you were living there. 
A few go back in, a few linger 
and go on listening 
to the long opera 
of their derailments
their loves lives liberties
and all those tunes
they go on whistling
when they finally join
the majority and get moving,
and every town they come to,
you will too, has a fence
around a backyard
or a courtyard with a tree
stuck in the middle, with
or without figs on it,
a moon over a steeple,
you wonder how things
dare to be so bright when
you’re so dim, and there you are.

4 June 2003
MOORISH SONG

Fall asleep into language
wake with an apple in your hand

fall asleep to language
the apple’s in your mouth now

too big to chew. What
is the difference, the difference

is everything, is what
a word does, a difference is what knows

any one from any one,
there is no other.

4 June 2003
L’autre

I think the other
is a myth
like Marco Polo

I think the archer
has run out of arrows
and loves the sound of rain

I think the people
who find amber
lose something too

I think it is cold
this morning in the linden tree
there it is not

I think you don’t
have to do very much
to make change happen

just a little bit
and then it’s gone
but the door is opening

4 June 2003
TRUST ME

To be beside oneself, to stand
over there in the usual encampment, a soul
in a pink tent
waiting for help

*au secours*

it is the Wolf that comes,
the green one
with the wind in his mouth,
his soft paws
all over your lap

the wind in his teeth
nibbles you gently gently
he shakes
the whole earth loose
from the sky so
that you can dream again.

5 June 2003
MATTER

Take out the pin
and the paper gardenia
falls from the coat.

Easter is too frequent
for any flower.

Rise from the dead.
Be Jewish again
and let us know you,

by skin this time,
the real way,
the anointed page
the glistening text

we trust the origin,
the word you tried
to drill us to remember,
the writing system of the soul,
body parts, leaping
squirrel, empty wine jug,
we trust the island
where none of these
fall. The lapel, though,
the lapel: where
the coat folds
back upon itself,
the *material*
in a rapture
of self-awareness
touches.

6 June 2003
Boston
apt to leave traces
shadows, tracks
where your mother
weaves the vines
but does not know
the craft

..

5 June 2003
Boston
calm sea
but unruly passage
the humps of quiet
sea lift
against the bucketing
boat how are you Sun
a Bach prelude
bothering gulls
a cormorant glides

now I have said
enough of where I am

hours later
home on the island
the wind is big
the sea small

6 June 2003
How much of what we see
is visible? Is it an island
or a path through scrub pines
over sandy shadows
where no one is waiting
and I can no longer
bear to be alone,

noigandres
Pound played with
that scholars knew or didn't.
and what could it mean
that they dance the way they do

what it means is
no other is known
non gnoisc andres
we are alone

the elk of the mountain
the lady of the fountain
the shadow of the passing train
all leave us
licked by time

I stare at my mother's shoes,

old books spilling from the Irish closet

my face in my casket.

6 June 2003
Competence is a dark horse anyhow
when you think of the Qur'an
and all the commentaries
the heart inherits
from the inclinations of the skin
to dance and touch the dancer

hardly moving and yet changing
position in space, a case
of Irish posture for example
milk-skinned and that marvelous
seductive stiff-softness of the Irish

but you always know anyhow
what the law actually says
before you get around to bending it
to fry your own fish in some weird oil
where do they come from
the heart's sly heretics

old men with their young chicks?
I'll tell you what the law is,
the law is me, the law is minute
hour day week year,
the law is everything but moon.
The moon is on her own --
that is the whole secret of the system

and I'm shocked I finally let it out.

6 June 2003
That the first day
voices outside
just like opera
but no music
what meaning

the secret masters of apparency
have come disguised as fishermen

it is their voices we hear
if they are really voices not just noises

too far away to be sure
but we hear, we hear words

no matter what is speaking,
they confuse us,

we hear something, guess something,
see something and remember

but the central episode
of every story is always missing
the real Pessoa, the person invented
to inscribe identity

has no identity. Voices with no mouth.

6 June 2003
Cuttyhunk