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One lives on a piece of rock what
does it matter the name they give it
Italy or France or Barrytown

the ground just strong enough
to hold me up, weak enough
to let me move

I am a field between gravity
and levity no wonder bodies
pull me to themselves that

is my actual home.

27 January 2001

BY THE AMBER SHORE

grind up all my old eyeglasses and try to see
make a paste and rub it on the wall
to let the light through

window window

you know what light it? Light is fuck.

2.

but got to see the years that came before
as yet to come
all this time crap is in my face

clear the stables, Hercules,
means sweep the philosophic mistakes away

the false idea that things take time
or happen in their little hour

3.

so this lump of amber in my pocket
I rub I rub
my thumb goes Becketting against
all winter long my overcoat

they say rub rub the amber's good for eyes

and what are eyes good for
aye, there's the rub.

Eyes is only good for you for you
Since me has no need to see

Me nothing to see, me lives in a tree

So when I rub this lump of
amber in my pocket

all history vanishes and leaves me who.

27 January 2001

MERCY

Comes in a green car
used to have a star
used to go back and forth in a war

and there you are
enough of a tune to get your goat

hurrying along San Pedro that's all
this man passed me and saw me not

and lo I was invisible at last
and pretty happy with that destiny
hit JV's for the remotest champagne

I buy you everything
computer blue sweater and faux-fur coat

I don't come to town often but when I do
the whole of it is all about all about you

27 January 2001

A LAP

sunned
maybe some (sit

there) sand
some same
semaphor

a drowning man
arms in air

tearing at the sky
why don't
we look up
from the book

a book a lap a book a lap
the same
some sand settling
across the sky

look up anew
the maybe man
is not now seen

gone and the sun
also sifting

along your long skin

o it is you
I sinned to know

you simmering
sandy sun
sun ascensions

sequences of sin
piloting it in
mooring slow sky
to the city

tethered tethering.

27 January 2001

at the market for overcoats a man bought a fox
still alive but pretty shabby
why would he buy one but then again
why would somebody have one for sale

a market is wonderful, like a furnace in winter
making life possible
but life isn't possible

life is a car that slipped backwards over the cliffs
into the sea
and we are slow drowners

we count our money and tread water and think about foxes.

27 January 2001

Some Texts A Lustrum Lost

I'm still here too
as interruption:
dark words on light screen
breaking the light

like almost anything you see
trees up out of snow
crows in trees
sky talkative with crows

all we are is interruptions
in something but what?

or all of it is just a pause
wet with new snow we
ask each other questions

to which come no answers or
irrelevant ones it seems

like a dog barking in the woods.

8 February 1996

on these cold still nights
the wind listens to us

the wind listens us
stills us night

cold on these the
listening you do

answers me you still
night of all these listen

to have the wind

all around me

to wear the wind
as a kind of still

cloth listening to the
form the night

stands under still
except the dark

the stars one by one

11 February 96

I knew a
scorpion once
sauntered into a sink in Berkeley
in the mild winter of such places,

bare olive trees in warm sun and the woman
of the house standing on the windowsill
singing to the neighbors in the courtyard,
you know, California,
and the husband caught the scorpion
and I suppose killed it
at any rate it wound up resting
sort of forever in a block
of neon purple plastic
years later he gave it to me.
I have no idea of where it is
but I still have the morning.

14 February 96

(reading Laurel Hoyt's poem)

so a shadow
is a shout

that sees us
from the dark
inside

the wood inside the head the lively
wood the wind blows from

swiftly
from the right side

19 February 96

found and revised 28 January 2001

But a day needs its own beast of burden
a yak listening to Billie Holliday
enduring the fusion culture of his Sherpa boss

say or two people on the phone at midnight
bearing the beautiful burden of the other
snug in the blanket of distance electric electric

who did not know awake could be so tender

28 January 2001

Is it a story yet
Like a book in the lap
Or a siren passing
On its way to woe

But leaving me here
Inside the mirror
Strangely safe
From every danger but me.

28 January 2001

“Want to make God laugh? Make a plan.”

I want to make a contract with tomorrow
without making anybody laugh

so I will heap up on a silver platter
a clueless pile of sesame seeds

every one of them a good idea
and nobody knows which one is mine.

28 January 2001

AJMAC

Locate, day of the sinner. Locate
who is that. Who's that
saying Lord Hear My Prayer.

What is a prayer is a prayer?
Is it anything or a sigh?
An Oh Please! burped
out of the woodwork of my soul?

o just imagine me.
Ajmac in Yucatan
moiré of the window screen I see I see
fusion is a big mistake

the drum's asleep.
Heart of Earth, Earthquake, Heart of Sin,
repentance tremble finger hands I knew
handled dried snakes skinned
for sale on the piazza at the portal

of the cathedral the cathedral

this meat was mine
me too and me a drum
fits every hammer

listen to my prayer
a breath in love with itself
and then in love with you a prayer
listen to me we
both need a new name.

29 January 2001

Spilled? Spelled
into an accuracy

like stars
unimaginably far
I find them

though numbers exist
to say the separations

from here
it is a matter
of waiting
for here to happen

and nobody I know
can wait that long

we make do
with the glimmer
of an absent fact.

29 January 2001

but we keep wanting to know it
the thing that will not be known

the thing that slips through the harp strings
leaving only the faintest tone behind it

but a sound
is there

I swear it, it is the thing
like a flashlight making the skin of the fingers

turn ruby red, rose-purple, where they join,
a color that is not inside the body and not outside

but happens when the hand holds the light
itself and some of it spills through

and that is where the color comes
a friction between conditions

I hate harp music
blurting out so pretty what we should barely hear.

30 January 2001

HEINRICH IGNAZ FRANZ VON BIBER

To sit for an hour with a cup of coffee
o yes and let *it* think
not the coffee not the music not the me.

==

Rainlight and luster
again and again
we descend to particulars

==

before beavers
what swam

and untaught
who to dam

inextricable entity of mind

==

every beast a bright idea
every snake a mute velleity

==

bird song
not long

except a
cryptomeria

sparrow in or on it
(bonsai for Biber)

30 January 2001

ARS POETICA 31 I 2001

Do another thing to a thing you did.
Discover a new planet
Then the work begins.

Build some cities,
Domesticate imaginary beasts.
Livestock, limestone,

Your work won't ever begin to be finished
Until you feel in your fingers and make me feel in mine
A much-worn too long in circulation 100-something banknote

From a country that hasn't even been founded yet.

31 January 2001

ARS POETICA 31 I 2001, 2

Because the doing of it is all you do.

All the rest of it (the best of it

The first of it) comes.

31 January 2001

let me tell myself a little bit about the night

we hear and we don't hear
all those irrelevant illuminations that scar the night sky
what do they tell me
whatever it is, I do not listen, I try to pay
attention but the coin I offer is bogus

or at least no longer in circulation.

Things have stopped believing in me.
Maybe they just put up with me
The way roads endure the houses that crowd against them.

31 January 2001

