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Pitcher rhymes with beehive
What shall we do with the moon

When the shadows fall asleep
And dawn unfolds
That terrible mirror

Looking down on the city
Everything the color of my fear.

17 November 2000

Exaggerate it

The glass gives more

Than you need to know

And nothing of what you need.

Show rhymes with No.

17 November 2000

THE DEATH OF OSIRIS: 17th NOVEMBER EVERY YEAR

(starting with a syntagm abducted from Mallarmé)

Ill-Sphinxed by the sand itself the sobs of the far god
who dies today come through to us all too clear
all too human that broken desert that coffin full of breath
stone stone a man must die and die by his lover's hand

his brother's hand his wife's hand must piece him piece
by piece together until every fold of shadow in him
aligns with his lost body lost beauty and then he stands
proud at the helm of that weird ship that is the sky

sailing forever away from us yet carrying us ever in its wake
to a scant resurrection in which not even a child would believe
who wakes up every morning in the same strange bed
once again triumphant over the malevolent furniture of night

alive alive a little mouse a moment free between death's paws.

17 November 2000

LA TACHE VERTIGINEUSE

There was a woman at the table in the underground library; though pale, and wearing clothes subdued in hue, she was made to seem colorful, even gaudy, by contrast with the ashen table at which she sat under the bleak indifferent but powerful scrutiny of the fluorescent lights caged above her. A dark book lay in front of her, its straw-colored pages sprawled ; she did not have to hold the book. It lay on the desk obediently open, and she read it attentively, an elbow to each side of the book, her head propped in her hands as she read. Undirected as the light was, it still cast a shadow across her, down the long slope of her throat from hairline to vanishing point in her nice sweater. He stared at this shadow and tried to discern the character and destiny of the reading woman by means of it. But the longer he stared, the more he seemed to sway and grow dizzy, to be falling, slowly but ineluctably, forward towards her, towards the shadow she sported on her skin. Into the shadow he was falling, deep vertigo, his head careening around the room, eyes swimming, he seemed to fall forward into her shadow and wanted to, wanted to and he fell. Everything we ever see is an abyss.

17 November 2000

how one finds
is a matter
not of looking

by hearing
to trust your presence
in the room

17 November 2000

*“Demain, dès l’aube, à l’heure où blanchit la campagne,
Je partirai. Vois-tu, je sais que tu m’attends.
J’irai par la forêt, j’irai par la montagne.
Je ne puis demeurer loin de toi plus longtemps”*

Domain, day'll orb a lure — who blanched me like a pain?—
She's part away. If war too, she seeks two more towns,
Shriek pure laugh away, shriek pure lamenting,
She knows we'd marry, all wine to drop less long down.

17 November 2000

1.

Rift valley scar belief system
mist seems blue far no color close
I have fucked a map and come up thin
cracking tower mute petroleum

a stupid metaphor rules the world.
Everything a needy blossom. Bramante's
columns against Bernini's,
the dust storm turbine devil bleuâtre

print the name of your amour in every shadow
old fashioned as a letter ars combinatorial
a classroom dithered by the giggles cause
every word is funny if you look inside

since this was Africa before the ocean came
arguing our chromosomes apart rosettes
for leopards blue eyes for Picardy terebinth
in deserts organic solvents sunrise

so hot the living day be peace on ceremony
lack is lord of want and has but yearning
pay by yen the longest ocean timothies the shore
by dint of urban values grass towers one

no longer is the same as all I seek to penetrate
the shimmer salty womb they call the future
a man coming through the gate to sell an ear of corn
is me à tes genoux I am your father too

no person can make do with less than three
the one who made you the one who found you
and the one you spend your life researching for
until the trinity is done and you are you at last

your own son and the holy breeze churns in
from the Atlantic fog we grew up worshipping
steadfast and hurricane and wordy rock
the shingle pebbles are such unlikely flowers

musk over ambergris a bullkelp testicle
to reek in rock pools live long enough for indigo
each age a segment of the spectrum reach
under me and beyond the other all your sex.

17 November 2000

2.

transposed magenta a daring field to kill
or bring to live by color alone! the rapist
of colors the metropolitan of smells a priest
is a priest in any skirt Nijinski's anniversary

for I too wanted to leap up with my haunch as yare
as a négresse by Baudelaire constrained to fly
when all I wanted was the Torse of Anima the skin
of theory and the meat of someone actually being there

desire being apt to this misprision to think is real
and real is inconceivable I break my candle short
and burn it in any hole because cathedrals
have rear walls that curve and amplify the virgin light

into accesses of orgasmic blue lady-chapel full of go
I stayed and sympathized like an aunt with shingles
praying to you every moment on my beads of horn to come
relieve me from my silence when that! alone

was your princeliest gift a dewdrop from your tongue
a round ripe silence smithied by your womb
then loined into me by the deeds of grace you oil my lips
you nipped my tongue so that it would not tell

the actual enterprise of being still out loud
and very fast because my shabby bathrobe on the subway
sea fogs and chancleer and Vatican and lust
and all your oil could barely wet my skin

outside the buses knew the one thing I wanted most to go
north was clarity past the tiny elegant boutiques
where we bought and cry identity outside to
the shapely ear into which this word that is the city speaks

and live there with a thousand pencils to build on rock
a magnate of meaning in an unparsed land
forest once and forest again and I'm the little light between
to be a house at last is only to give pleasure

every history is antipodes the deserts of opera
blue dye comes off your jeans and stains your thigh
because my mother was a druid and all women still
the gift of giving answer most immaculate sin.

18 November 2000

GNOMIKA

What will it be
and why not?

Can the opposite
Go to church too

Is there a calendar
Only shoes know?

Can you refuse
What I don't offer?

That's where a pelican
Knows better than the sky.

18 November 2000

BUSINESS

When I asked my partner
Is the store open
He looked into his hands
And said the cabbage
Is still sleeping the fox
Has eaten the chicken
There is nothing to sell
Except what we remember
So we opened an agency
Called Poetry and nobody
Bought anything but
Everybody came.

18 November 2000

COASTAL TRAGEDY

I learned Breton
To speak with fish
They learned French
Thinking me such

18 November 2000

All woods are haunted
I think you said
Can't tell where one
Leaves off and one begins

The trees the air
Between them charged
With a strange light
Like a mist at evening

With no mist
Something you taste
Without a mouth
It is the only place

Where it's always getting dark.

18 November 2000

as if at last you could try that
stifled argument

3.

great city big enough for every love the tower
every is and every word a pinnacle researched
a sentence is a city is a man she is
because every word is vortex beating ever in

and forward through the sentence and up to god
that dialect of sky no one can speak
and every body imitates we are veined in water
veniced with sumptuous departures come

everything tells you to be a boat this mundane
gondolier beneath the skankiest rialtos offers you
for a bridge is a boat's dream of heaven to be
here and there at once in one great prance over hydrogen

because it does not stop and all its forms are licit
bare locust tree with a hawk sitting in it waiting
or is it watching or it in museums as we stand
staring at the wall we really are looking for prey

waiting for the fatal move in art that makes it ours
the fatuous Teotihuacans of Republican politics
sell everything then buy it back again forever
till only one of you has all my money then

strolling through the gutted dream fish scale bright
architectured sheen in atmospheric nitrogen
winter stumbling among the ghost of Penn Station
still shimmer-teaching Room and Scale and Balance

all round the ruin of its grand proportions
the city body grows its beauty still flesh of light
round riverruns of stone and all that stays
is the grief of an idea fixed smile of a thought

fallen asleep amid thinking and stale no good to us
but the ghost is good not what we remember
but how the building stood and by itself projected
arrogant destinies we could marry could inhabit

basements in the sky profound as typewriters steeples
lead-roofed like Loire chateaux but who dares speak
for geometry when all the rage now is arithmetic
silly add-ons of unpersoned marketeers

19 November 2000

AGATE

To be unscrupulous is not a burden or the cast off agates of interminable Oregon springtime storms I wonder when you will come again with the flare of your sauternes skirt flutter loose from the web of rondure as if at every moment the cloth tried to escape the body bent to retrieve from the cheese-pale sand the latest trove of smooth scoured pebbles god knows which one will show upon polishing a brilliant green or knell a somber jasper like the dried blood of a martyr or a mother god knows because god is a stone too

the stone's a sky by Mozart

wait again I am trying to say the simplest thing how your body gets between me and the world I mean the light gets between me and what is seen

o forgive the light

why? why not let everything fall true and permanent and always tending towards whatever each thing tends towards whatever sphere of being a thing subtends o I could touch you now endorse the sumptuous topology of your address by manual cant the all too practiced take and give of fingers and o the womb of my palm

yearning cupped to take the curve of you in curve impregnating
curve until geometry catches fire and burns the silly numbers
leaving only the primal structures of which they were somebody's
shorthand

somebody we'll never meet call her Pythagoras

the mother of your hips the mother of the iris pattern in your eye
the mother of all color

because god is a stone

some other one must come must rise wet haunched immediate
from mind the way Botticelli shows her rising but she is single and
unaccompanied by conditions unserved by circumstance she is the
singularity that rises as the mind wakes from its dream of thinking

and is there and bears in upon the stone

and the stone

hears it and turns gold κλεοπάτρης χρυσοποιία

and this is now this is happening now

and now again

[19 November 2000]

J'ai vu l'ombre infinie où se perdent les nombres
— Hugo, “Contemplations”, VI,iv.

seashape of
clouds piled against
mauve sundown
ocean entire
drowned river bronze
and jade beneath
the arc of bridge

we cannot look away
until the wind says to

inland turning
to walk home
there is a river
everywhere also
to cross to carry.

19 November 2000

