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perfect dark

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The Blue Chalk Line

He wrote on the brick wall in blue chalk

“I know who wrote this.”

Well I know who wrote this and

you know who's reading this

and that takes care of that

With the Unbearables 9-13-95

I notice I am running and the red dirt hits my Reeboks
Up or down, I'm baffled, go for up
I stumble to the crosswalk, see no clumps of people, ask
The first man sitting and the man who's sitting next to him
Tells me it's on further and yes, they do want readers

On the left are walkers, on the right bikes and a bench
Is where we gather, Brooklyn Bridge, maybe 40
Yes, there are familiar faces and someone calls for Tsaurah
And I talk to Tsaurah Litsky whose poems I've liked and
Ask to join our mag
And she likes it and we laugh
Then we string out down the walkway
Someone marks the 20 paces
Stands a poet, 20 paces comes another
20 paces comes another, oddly necklaced on the crosswalk

At a signal we start reading, runs a jogger
Goes a stroller, walks a couple, stops a lady listening closely
To my reading, hears my reading and she likes it

I scream to the river, hung by cables, see pier 17,
South Street Ferry and it darkens and
Lights glisten, traffic's loud
I say "Do you want to hear a poem" then they stop, look
In my eyes and they listen looking in my eyes

I scream, I gesture. I declaim, I love it, to the River
To the joggers, to the runners, to the little man who mikes me
Bobs and weaves and kneels and films me
As I scream to the River, to the man who stops
To hear me one-on-one, into his
Eyes I read my poem, do not flinch from his attention
Tear the mike off when it's over, learn the little man
Who films me has a cable tv show

Then it's over
I hit Sparrow, 'nother poet, with my folder
And we group, start procession, trailing
Ambling, different sizes, shapes and
Colors, a parade as poets have 'em to a party
Which blooms after
Brooklyn Heights

We climb and climb and reach a rooftop, someone (untruth) says
Hart Crane once lived here and the view of downtown 'scrapers, buildings strung
With lights and glistening and it's all been
Good

Teletubbies. Again. Do It Again.

Like the bunnies at Orly
the rabbits munch the grass.
The flowers are appallingly artificial.
It doesn't matter to toddlers.

The teletubbies do a kind of conga line.
It looks different in writing.

Po woke up and wanted a blow-ey
kind of day. He blew his mylar blanket
to the other side of the room
where it bounced off the wall.
He blew Twinky-Winky up a slide
and all four went outside
and pooched out their little pot-bellies
on which are miniature tellies.

Itsy bitsy entertainment. Again. Do it again.

Corona

She made this cap
unafraid of the city's lingering threat,
was not troubled by thoughts of mutability,
of how this ephemeral thing would fare 5 years from now.
Vulnerable yarn. Its fragility,
nothing she thought of
in her naivete
or her desire to knit a perfect thing.
Gives me something I could not give myself.

Calling Bill Kushner

And so we collaborated.

He did one line and I did another.

I wanted to look down his throat

to see where some of them came from.

I mean how'd he come up with them?

And he was mad at me sometimes

'cause he didn't think of some lines I did.

I was honored.

It was so intimate I wasn't sure we should be doing this.

Ocularis

Angry that the eye of god is
closed or blind, does not exist
he
wants to plant a camera
in his eye to catch it all.

The windows in the prison
cells look only up in this prison
built to reform each man
placed alone with Bible and god's eye.
Many go mad and prisons are reformed.

“Read into the subway surveillance
camera,” he says, plunking a tape
recorder with its flashing light in
front of me. “I'm recording Tom,” he
says, evidently bent on being intrusive

But he LOVES what he does,
tells of the man who used to
come out and count how long it took
for them to come out and say “You can't surveille
the surveillance,” arrest him.

**Nine Days in Space Influences
the Development of Locomotion in
Neonatal Rats**

for Sparrow

The flight animal cross-walks; it puts the hindlimb in front of the place where the forelimb was. The animal recovers slowly.

Moon Killer

I can't see what you feel.
Moon Killer murderer.
I have kept this heart alive for 3 years
by electrolysis.
Suffering a bit of a brain bruise myself, livious.
Still purple, then green, then yellow, isn't it?
I'm not medical personnel.
Preoccupied. Not exactly like
prefabrication, prevarication.
Stop trying to baffle me, stifle me,
paint me gangrenous green.
Moon macadam, moon path
slicing through the blackening water, agua negra whom
somebody in the audience doesn't know
what it means. Secateurs out there,
clumsy scissorhands and scissor mouth.
Dark butter to mend with. I say that
we'll work it out in shades of black,
but mebbe not. I have often kept my powder dry,
rifle held above head crossing night rivers.

Perhaps one of us in the room was driven to cannibalism,
when the moon croons must eat again, smears a glop of
synthetic flesh. Chants "Synthetic flesh", loves to repeat the term "synthetic flesh",
smears it on himself like lard.

*(This is the face I've been given, ugly, ugly,
nothing to be done, but goodwill lives within it.)*

LISTEN TO ME. The spell against this is:

carve tallow yellow as butter with carving knife (#7)
Shape it SOO carefully in the shape of a moon or a whale.

(Memory)

During dream the body is in a kind of paralysis
to keep it from taking on the actions of the dream.
When you're wired your r.e.m. appears on a screen.
Dreams become graph waves. I warn you to be aware
that dreams are measurable waves and feelings
can appear on tv as physical activity.
Feelings are things that hop in your head.
Dreams are hills and valleys.

You can float an iron on the mirror pond of mercury (memory).
You can put a plate and spoon on it and it will not sink.
Half a glass of wine weighs more than several silvery pounds.
Tiny quicksilvery drops are teased out of the dirt by
miners whose work weeks are improbably short
as exposure makes them mad as it's said did Alice's hatter.
Mad as ergot. Last seen leaving The Frying Pan, Polly-11-9-,5 Kills_
Same as who knows what.
Extensive medical background, the dreams of the moon,
a missing heart.

Dream Addict

The damned don't cry.
Prior dark red dog. Babblefish.
Rain of small green flames.
The donut emergency tire. Scratch rabbit.
The wind fills the sails
 but the ship stands still.
The bird which breaks if
 it does not move.
I've prayed to a star that lied.
Today I met my face; it wasn't bad.
I, Peripatetica, walk about.
Found. The missing, bleeding
 fleshy chunk of puzzle piece.
Mistakenly thought extinct.
Her imagination was a terrible sword.
You can only hold so much tension
 between your lips. Leave her like a rock
 in the road. Throw something dead
 down a well.
I don't stutter anymore.
Survivor of paradise and the storm.
You have found me out. You found me out.
Wet your beak in my stream.
These wings are 'sposed to cool me down.
I'll dry my tears on his skin
 and he'll nurture me with his dick.
Mr. Kleenex Man. Sometime sweetgrass.

* * *

I've been having to look at a
 number of faces that will
 no longer look at me.
Ocatillo living fence, what the blue turtles like.
I can smell snow,
 the brilliance of what is
 left unsaid.
You hope the clown distracts the bull.
Where's the who. There's no who.
Horse of a different color. Same
 fucking ride.
Glass beast. Mud garden. Ecstatic devouring.
My body is a foreign country.

*Y ahora me llamas una
bestia. Bueno, pinchas
gringos pelones,
aqui vengo.*

I feed the animal. My eyes are still afraid.
Chick, chick, chick. Sympathetic ink. Weasel word.
Love wears different colors. Y.T.T.E.

* * *

Hegullah megullah. Archival rage. Thought papers.
The whiff of the past. In the rooms.
The room remembers me.
Now, now, quickly, quickly.
Mall food for the truly ravenous. Alar.
Kind mirror.
He'd be funny in this situation,
chanson de mal-mariée.
I don't trust them. They may
have told me the facts, but
they haven't told me the truth.
Can you see my teeth,
are they translucent yet? Bottini.
Surprise fountain, clock with a helical spring.
Here, sir fire, eat.
The predator becomes the hero.
The executor becomes the survivor.
I am like seaweed on the shore.
I am the painted bird, your sacred inner bitch.
The razor-Porsche of rage.
The room remembers me. The whiff of the past.
Clock with a helical spring. Tea is not smart.
It is not smart.

* * *

The dark problem. The difficult horse.
The way it dances on its cloven hooves. The
half-broken horse, its surge of life, its
scintillating failure to do as expected. Spirit, spirit,
call us. Lead us where.

And if you have a tuning fork inside
it quivers.
Sleep is a sickness which must be cured,

dream addict -
My illness is absorbed. I
will this to be.

**To Paul Claudel Before I Found Out
He Was An Anti-Semite and Turned in the Plane Ticket**

Claudel, Claudel, Paul, Paul,
cent phrases pour l'eventails.
You have cured me of the sea
but fanned from a cinder to a torrid blaze
my love for you.

I'm saying
this book is S
O beau ti
ful, I'm afraid it
might fly away.

And you, Paul, I love you for your poetry.
But I hope your teeth aren't bad.

I'm in love with a dead man.
I suppose it was inevitable.
Difficult but not insurmountable.
not like my last relationship.
This time will be different.
I think from your phrases you would have loved me.
Catholicism is an impediment and did you like women?

I'm good at logistics.
I'll elude the gravekeeper somehow.
Hope it won't take long.
Hope the mound is not littered with wet leaves.
Love in November is like that at times.

I'll lie upon your grave until your fingers reach me.
Consider me the loam around your roots.

I'll show you the man in rollerblades and purple at Dean and Deluca,
the man who always comes alone
wearing a dressy leather belt on Saturdays.
He has dyed his hair, but not his moustache.
He has all the mannerisms of the charismatic, but no charisma.
He acts like a writer but I know he teaches school.
These men are not for me.
They do not see me,
nor if they saw my words would understand.

We'll have coffee and little breads with chocolate
like France so you won't be homesick.

Paul, you would understand this.

(Bitter tears will not wake him up.
It's evocation of the quotidian, the droll
which make us want to live.)

A man's love is understanding.
And you have walked in springs of understanding.
And walked with me in words those last read pages.

After all I've done
you don't object to
living in America, do you?
My French is not bad.
We can travel.

Dog Snake Night

This dog snake Iraqi night
he had slept well, taken off his
boots against the regs.
Even over snores he heard the little
sift of sand as he up-ended them,
pulled them on and moved past
sleeping men, signed on by the sentry,
to the can. He crouched, shit pulsing
like at home, and there was paper.
He sees the sky completely without stars.
Shocked, as he has made the stroll without his gun,
moves back as quickly as he can. The sentry,
whom he doesn't know had seen him, but he
was fairly sure he would not tell.

Perfect Dark: "The Informers"

paradoxical undressing
before they died of hypothermia
they tore off all their clothes
as they felt burning hot
the burn of cold
and it is odd she leaves
on the black bikini pants
and bobs her butt
something perhaps to do with the ratings

the movie snakes across the screen
the characters trapped in a cat's cradle
of relatedness (and unrelatedness)
which means that when she lies in Malibu
starves for sun
she thinks will cure her AIDS
which she does not know she has
the lines of the possibly infected
pull the characters together like
a needle tightens a stitch

but who is infected
is not a question answered in this flick
where the characters exit alone
in brutal isolation
knowledge of which is kept from all
these hearts

O S

ghost meat
that I would eat
if you were edible
not just incredible
dullard's snow
I surely know
how joyous my coffee becomes me
held in your stolid embrace
what a treat_ the way you hold my coffee
so inert! I mean no hurt,
you're telepathically serene
you know well, you do not tell
me what to do or how to do it

O Styrofoam, o Styrofoam
Wie schon ist deine Weisheit

Pet bean,

saltando, atman, your soul, a brief grey moth, has flown, safe boundaries left behind, clarified the small balled web, confusion, in which you hopped, in purloined seed, pirated from parent plant, sold as pet, you are indifferent to indignity, slavery of a sort, pet bean, totally concentrated on your own concerns with the narcissism of god.

Bali Blast 10-12-02: Surfing

I am the rain jacket
that kept out the rain.
I saw them now
their hair on fire.

I said "Run. Don't try to put it out."
Next their clothes on fire, their
faces on fire and they are running, bone on road.

Older guy, walking,
fell down, and dead.
"Are you surfing? You are probably out surfing somewhere,"
but I was spending the night without pain killers
on undressed burns.

She said "I can't feel my mouth,
help me."

THEN watch from wheelchair,
150 surfers paddle out to sea, circle,
yell your name and you say in dreams
"Hey, Crab, I'm back."

Koh-do: Kaori Buumu

It's a kind of tea ceremony for the nose
A sort of sensory blender
Where one "listens" to the incense
Scents are used to purify, to cleanse
Smells to see images
Smells are taste
You smell to see, listen to smell
Playing the world of fragrance, Kumikoh
Are games with the shuffled packs of incense
Named like Moon, or Guest, one guesses which
A sliver small as a microchip heats on a slice of mica
Large as a fingernail, nests on a bed of ashes
Coating a white-hot coal in a burner shaped
Like a tea cup
One hand forms a chimney, the other holds the bowl
Raises, sniffs and turns the head, sniffs and turns

Slides of the most illustrious
Piece of wood in Japan are shown
The word Jin-koh means "sinking in water", heavy wood
Sunk in the water of Southeast Asia for months
And sliced with care
Each cut neatly labeled
Records are kept, a scribe records
I give to Masataku Hata a button marked
"Poetry Advocate"
It wafts to Kyoto

Jardin Crepuscule

I saw the film "Sudan" (1945)
Maria Montez burns leather
On a buckskin horse across
Huge waves of sand dunes
Has "slave" branded on her arm
Escapes, burns leather again
(Everyone wears weird costumes
Turhan Bey wears a midriff baring top
And a little shirt)
When she dismounts
She has spike-heeled shoes
Whose fetish this was I have not discovered
In the movie this is an anachronism
As well as a hoot
The "Fashion of the Times" in February of 1995
Has skirts which look like slips
And models who look like Courtney Love
Skagged out in spike-heeled shoes
Ru-Paul seems fine in 'em
But Ru-Paul if you fall it's such a long way down

The death penalty comes back on Monday
I guess I'll wear black

River Bed

Here we are in the confusing corn
Waiting for the next paddlewheel steamer
Or web-footed bird. There are no attack swans today
None, none, none
Or swan boats, only glide or slup, slup, slup

The sunshine boys depart
For the identification parade, knowing,
They walk the whole length of the parade
Before saying what they recognize

Smart went crazy, snapped like a green peapod, but
Incidental. He snapped back again, elastic as a pair of socks
Only the angry salad cared

The winds filled the sails but the boat stayed
Which scared some sailors
But we were mellow

They are calling the king of the moon Your Lunacy
They are saying a poor man went to play his instrument
Below the sea, ignoring the logistics of breathing and soggy strings
Let them say what they will
We are not dissuaded
We board the paddlewheel swan
Along with several random others about whom we wondered
All the way across, but they ignored us, looked straight ahead

Martín Ramírez

Jinete! Salve me la vida con su pistola
de afuera. Estoy cerrado en
este lugar blanco como nieve, negro como
petroleo, blanco como el algodón que se
ponga en las ventanas de la nariz.

Centaur, in profile, save me with the pistol
brought in from outside. I am shut up in
this white place, cold as snow, black as oil,
white as the cotton they stuff up the windows of your nose.

La Palomita

Send me the dove of a word
a palomita, palabrita.
I'm lonely on this island
and as they say "No man..."
I borrowed a pen to
take off the weight
of carrying these words
to paper at home – some heavy groceries,
me a deliveryman of words, lightening the load.
The waiter seeing me scrawl
was amused. And you, dear reader?

DESIDERATA

Skin lives for 45 days.
It has no aorist sense, no emotive particles,
no dual numbers.

A clumsy thief, I took the book you'd signed.
Did I want you?
Forbidden book boosted for a night.
I slept in the room with a signature.
It was a fool thing to do.

I do not want you, but I know where you live.

A clumsy thief, I took the book you'd signed.
Did I want you?
In the conceptual empyrean, I desire you,
shaped as you read, no friction, no shame-filled
aging hides, no sound of breath, no need for clouds or breeze.
A clarity.

You put a handful of soft new snow in your mouth.
You pull me toward you.
I ride the kirin of my fantasy and head back and
O.

“After three miles exhaustion becomes ecstasy,”
(a stepping out of yourself), the sign says,
someone swimming as fast as she can.
I'm incredulous, think they say it because of the “e”s,
sneaking the book back.
Let us return to our natural forms,
though in the time it took to write this, we've changed,
some skin sloughed, still won't speak.

A handful of snow, your hand pulling -
You are as discarnate as the moon
and I so much as touch.

I finish the poem.
I shelve the book.

GRAND CONCOURSE

Bruce Bailey's Missing Head: Vivid

This place is so more real than now, I found the vacant lot I thought I'd find Bruce Bailey's missing head. Seems smaller now. Consider the emotional size of vacant lots of the past. Still glints of shards of broken glass, green, who knows how old.

Bitemporal, Bilocate

In the bar it's more then than now, the paint has changed, geography of the room has not. The same oak bar, the placement of the door the same. Who says you can't bilocate? I am more there ten years ago than now but I am in both place.

Yellow Arch and Dun

And there it is, the day-glo Mickey D's, a surreal puppet show of drive-by greed. I jump the concrete wall designed to stop roll offs, the alley lower behind and there it is. I realize shocked I went there every day and could not recognize it and there's an added sign, (ACS) and there it is, smaller than I remembered, a hanger saltine box of dun-colored bricks. And there it is, the 2nd floor where I sat too long, no exit.

A Huntin Twinny Fit Street

Damn, Yankee game, the cars are crammed and I am late. We order lasagna (Yolanda's), glass of homemade wine. This time you tell me he said "I hope he kills you both," and you said "Well, Ms. Castaneda might like to hear about that."

I know I owe you lunch because you'd kept that part from me. We worked in the Ninth Circle of Hell, 2 stops past a huntin twinny fit, no exit.

Cow's Tails

After lunch we hit Duane Reade
for you to get some bleach on sale.
I ask for Whoppers, none.
You buy Cow's Tails, a caramel rope
3 inches long. We eat a few.
You try to give them to me and I refuse.
“Let's go back to the doors,” you say, “and walk around.”
And on the way you tell me “Cow's Tails. Let's
throw them at the door to exorcise those times.”
So back we go, hands full.

Trust

Red was the blood which opened up the portal
which showed the H its course.

Death was the rider.

Blue was the horse.

Red became the needle which subtly entered in,
took away the death, reintroduced its twin.

White are the sheets on which he strapped down breathes,
gobbling gulps of air no matter what he thinks.

He treats us like sheep.
We are cosseted.
He gently drives us to the green
to sleep, by a still water.
It is like a spa and
I obey correctly as I am grateful.
Even through the valley of the shadow
of death I am not scared because you are with me.
I am comforted by your rod, your staff.
I am fed even when my enemies are around;
you sooth my head with oil, my cup runs over.
Goodness and mercy will follow me
all the time and I'll always live in his house.

Ridicule

Black marble pool,
he won't go in it.

Acqua nera, he fears it.

“DON'T KNOW WHAT'S IN IT.”

He fears *crevettes a la nage*
will fix their pincers on him,
tells how Jeanne Anne died of
creeping blackness after
a moccasin bit her heel.

We in the swim laugh at him
raise our chins like fish as we splash, swim
(Here we go *loopteelo*. Here we go *loopteelie*)

“Watch out for the scorpions”, we say
as he sits legs pressed together, sulking.

“No scorpions in Connecticut”, he says.

SOMETHING will get us.

Something already has him.

Printing Demo 9-29-96

On the press, Baby Reliance,
I pull a fat wooden lever
called the devil's tail.
Letters bite on white,
which then becomes a page.
Don't go there I think of
metaphoric symbological possibilities.
Just the facts.

Death by Sea Bright

This sunny backyard's a concentration camp for drunks.
Free to dress well, live in clean houses,
free to come and go.
Free to turn themselves into projectiles,
meat to shoe the surgeon's feet.
Free to bear
a 3lb. boy whose beer-fed brain
forever scrambles words,
(letters jumble and collide.)

Celebrate this boozeless wake.
Move enormous finger joints.
Do not cry for your weeping liver,
say you count your drinks.

Two boxes of ash
strewn by hand in
sand and little Joan
comes back a slash
of mother ash on her
black pants, maybe sister ash,
both politely dead of drink.

Cigarettes drowned in paper cups
outside. Couches strewn with people's mid-day sleep.

Tallahassee: Wakula

7-16-03

When I get off the plane
my eye is on the Bzip,
the god of frantic fun.

I am
pursued by scorpion-headed gods
with bobbing dicks, o run
to frantic fun.

I am hugged by foliage
frantic as my self, by Spanish moss,
palmetto, giant oaks, taunted
by mockernuts. O mockernuts,
not what you seem, you taunt the ground, the
passerby who ambles by while
I am chased, (unwilling) chaste
and running from myself.
I won't get far.

The restless, greedy kudzu vine,
the hydrocilla plants which overtake the springs
kill the gentle apple snail
which is destroyed to get its good
the limpkins say, their cry
receding as they fade, lesser, fewer.

I take in what I can
as fast, whirring.
Whir like an anhinga's wing
which whir then spread to dry,
then dive and disappear but
there's another rush, the cool transparent
springs, the laughing springs exist for speed
whose pleasure is running, who,
intent and loving the motion, their motive,
run for the sake of run.

I hold papers, guidebooks,
demi-useless in this sun and,
breathing, breathe this most nutritious air
and feel the light, the rich
chiaroscuro of the steel black clouds,

their tumult near the lush and jostling trees
as green as breath.

The dual aspects of the god
of steelhead clouds and brilliant greens
have separate goals, the
clouds to spew out gouts of rain,
the leaves to shirk some off and drink some in.
They go their separate ways.

Bibliophage

Bibliophagia, 4-1-06 its day.
cake books on planks,
plonk wine. Caramel cake,
chocolate cake. We eat birthday cake-like cake.
Again for a moment it peeks,
the abjurer, the nay-sayer, its face
flits across yours,
but we laugh, we laugh
we chew the books. We are safe. We are
not the king who died of bibliophagia, q.v.
The New York Times. Birthday cake-like cake
I luf you. Luv you to bits. A brunette
hands me a magnolia: its leaves click as they touch.
At first I think it's real.

*Sugar leaves, sugar leaves you glisten in the light, later
cleared by an overeager waiter who took but didn't ask
and you my precious gone, mixed with coffee grounds.*

We sat in corridors of air,
on fat chairs on the sidewalk.
Tres gateaux, gato, gatito
no brushing of hairs.

A glittering, glittery air,
Spring unabashed, coatless for the first time.
Time for the spirit to cycle up and up
but not away, held close tenderly.

You're in your grey wool cocoon. Stuffy in there.
Your wax calendar sliding down the wall, procrastinating.
Buck up, chiclet, arise in the spring like a daffodil.

Amtrak: Post-Disaster Puzzlement: Dread Not

He moves snaky-hipped
through the corridor where the cars couple
humping, jouncing as we splay hands against
the corridor.

He says "I can't wait to take off this hair."

It's his hair? I...

And the kindly one now toothless
lives in High Falls, not the
High Falls that cataracts through Rochester
refracts the Genessee into such a stunning picture
beside the dun sedimentary escarpments, fleeing.

His baldness is different.

His eyes startlingly blue and his belly
and his toenails, fingernails like arrows
to keep one at bay.

And he says sometimes, sometimes
if he's sick he takes medicine for his nose
in his bag to work, but we are all in a hurry
a hurry, and dumbly we run.

Running to, running from
conjoin where the trains switch, shunt.

LP of a Nightingale: Bobst Library

Pulled into the raw grey day, collar up for cold,
armed with nervous petulance, popgun of a sort.
Shove myself out the double doors, MetroCard in hand.

You can only do the first time once.

Reluctant to touch what turns on
nightingale, nightingale that Callimachus,
liar, said sang on bloody battlefields.
Reluctant to end the almost heard,
moving to the song.

I drool on the disk the brisk man handed me,
dry the blob of spit which really spilled,
landing about where the terns turned.
No one sees. I count, recount
to get aright its luscious song and then it reels.

I find the nightingale is just a bird.
Tick I hear a sound almost “jug, jug”,
Eliot almost kin. Perhaps it's better in the dawn.

Steal a warm gold pen, souvenir of crossing, imagined to
recorded. Crossing is what counted.
How can I explain? I could not die without nightingale.
And you, what have you left undone?

DREAM BOAT

...had to go to 3 McDonalds to find
my dream boat, cost \$2.16.

I tore open its plastic bag, affixed its
masts and it was mine.

It is feisty, dauntless, faces into the
storm waves and perseveres. One
can say it is brave because it is insensate.

I shift it from place to place at home
and put it near my bed where that which
leaves me when I sleep can safely ride,
larking in the surf and moving forward even
when my eyes are closed. O this little
case for safety, progress even as I sleep,
I first learned of in Les Enfants Terrible
where he packs his bed at night, to sleep.

Mozambique

Joy returns from travel
talks of concrete
poured in shafts to
ruin elevators, did
the Portuguese leaving
Mozambique. Who
thinks of these things?
Is there a little booklet
called "Strategic Withdrawal"
taught in schools of war
to justify retreat, sweet
to weaken the enemy,
defending him from his ups and downs?
What is the shape of
this creation? Shows
they took war personally,
does not offer comfort to
the enemy, shows that even
in withdrawal they
left unwanted discharge.

RNC, NYC, '04

I click on channel one,
watch the newscasts.
Yes, they've won this time
terrorists being predictions
of home grown mayhem, "Seattle Battles", of
cops with itchy guns and really random nets
(one paper says yellow, another orange,
the nets I mean
as we're on red alert.)
I buy the hype this time,
sit on my couch
while others, rounded up, literally netted,
sleep on oil slick, Guantanamo on the Hudson's
abandoned bus depot,
until released in lawsuits
'cuz they're so long detained
in the mayhem, the anarchy of protest arrests.

One neighbor thinks they'll drop a bomb;
one is cool, predicts no deaths.
Many flee the town.
I sidle up to anyone
suggest they stock up
in case the power fails again
but I don't mean just that
I mean in case it all goes down.

So that we know
there were no deaths.
I count my toll in Poland Springs (6 gals.),
3 cans of turkey stew,
Vienna sausage, organic vegetable soup,
2 cans of Campbell's cream of mushroom,
and my full Go-Bag, complete with Mylar sheet.
I'm glad I have leftovers. I'm glad the
man I stood with in the bank
won't need the money he withdrew,
in case.

Flutterbug

O you would not have noticed
The beat of your own drama was
So absorbing to you, it made you deaf
You were like Clark the clerk with the
Walkman in his ears and you heard nothing
Some crackling, some darker meat exposed
And I was gone
Into a world of colors
Fraught with wings

Foxcatcher

The geese put a spell on me.
When they flew in a V, I
had to turn that way. Wings to
the left, I must stand very still.
Wings to the right and I must run
around the house, three times saying
“Hup, hup, hup,” in whatever I'm wearing
when they signal or whatever the weather.
No carrying food. Any food left must be
chewed upon return, coffee drunk as is.
If they sound at night, they must be quickly
viewed against the moon, scanned with glasses
from the right window, which must be sought.

I have remained waggish though alert,
they don't always get my jokes.
When I drove the tank to Tim's, the wooded
acres whipped my face, but did not change my smile.
His wife said he could not come out to play.
You cannot trust them.

The rocks spoke to me softly.
Chuchotantes. How soothing were their voices.
They let me know I was the sacred head
of this 800 span and I must act right.

“No,” you said, “we won't.”

I am the foxcatcher. I drink your *jouissance*,
feel it on my dick, my hands, the quick red fox.
I've caught the fox, your sex, your soul.

Hands out you stand, your brains are in your hands,
perfect in your thighs, the sudden heave
and he is down, the wrestling mat. For this you have worn gold
and know full well that thud would start the avalanche
frission in my dick's tip. The stones are certain, have
clarity, told me to load and pull the safety back. One your
arm, two your chest and then my enemies...your soothing
voice is gone. I've won this fall, you spy, you traitor
to my land.

SURVIVAL

Listen for frogs. Track a coyote.
They must drink frequently. Dew fall
may be trapped with a dog rag
which must be repeatedly wrung out.
You may get a pint an hour. Watch animals.
Don't eat snow or ice, drink urine.
Drink urine. Don't drink sea water.
Mix sea water with sweet water
to make it go further. Wet rocks can
explode in fire. Drink urine. Carry 2 pebbles
in your mouth.

Often reversal of feeling of hot and cold may occur.
Do not eat snappers where toxic algae is suspected.
Seek local knowledge. Ciguatera. Wear shoes
while wading in shallow water.
Do not pick up rays.
Prevention: avoid contact.
Seek local knowledge.
Do not eat morays.
Do not eat porcupine fish.
Do not eat trunk fish.
Trees attract lightning and may explode when hit.
It is advisable not to eat fish
that are acting unnaturally. Do not swim alone.
If you need help there won't be any.
Do not reach into blind holes.
Do not handle unfamiliar animals.

Fish with beaks eat algae.
Do not eat fish which blow up when captured or disturbed.
Rules to follow if bitten, stung or poisoned:
6th and last. Do not delay
seeking medical help when it is indicated.

Immersion foot. Lagoon glare. Sea mirage. Sand fog. The climbing bandage.
Eating gonads of sea urchin may cause intoxication.
If there is a question whether a fish is poisonous,
eat a small amount and await results.
Take a pea-size portion and chew it.
Do not perform a taste test on fish.
Remarks: wash fish with fresh water.
Do not put hands in coral crevices.

Red berries are more apt to be edible. When wading shuffle your feet. Fin fish and shell fish can accumulate waste. Tiny single-celled organisms bloom. Avoid inhaling red tide air. Open water fish are safe to eat raw. (Do not wash fish in sea water as it may contain bacteria, especially near shore.) Apply shaving cream and shave after man-of-war sting. Prevention: avoid contact. Fish that puff themselves up. Forest fire, get to body of water. Animals do this instinctively. You may have company.

The head, fingers, wrists, knees and ankles all lose a great deal of body heat in cold weather. Dead air space. Most bears have trichinosis. Livers of polar bears are poisonous. No birds or mammals are poisonous to eat. Rejiggered. Seek local knowledge.

The nose is the shark's most sensitive spot.

Low whistle carries best. The head, fingers, wrists, knees and ankles all lose a great deal of body heat in cold weather. Distress signals. Mirrors, cloth folds, body signals, noise. Triangles of fires. Wet green leaves for white smoke. Oil, tires for black. Avoid inhaling red tide air.

Ferns – none are known to be poisonous. Rub the leaf on the inner wrist and wait 15 minutes. Activated charcoal neutralizes all but mushroom or ergo poisoning. Scrape off fresh burned wood. A small fire is better than a large fire for almost all purposes. Reindeer moss. Eskimo salad. Russian asparagus. Cattail. Never eat snow. Hand fishing. (For example this refers to shipwrecked people who land on a coral island.)

He drifted for 130 days, fighting sharks and despair. It is better to have 3 20 minute naps than sleep for 3 hours. If an individual has nothing to drink, he must not eat. Miscellaneous Dangerous. They habitually seize their prey and pull it to the bottom to drown it before eating. Enemas of brackish water. Turtle's blood. 46 days eating algae.

Stay still. The position that causes minimal thermal loss in water.
Keep the nape of the neck above water. Survival
under the water. When disoriented under water, follow bubbles.
Between the last dive and flight in an airplane, adhere to the following delays.

Spontaneous separation of salt and fresh waters.

Flood runoff, carcass bearing, attracts sharks.
Sharks can go 6 weeks without eating.
Do not swim in shark-infested water while menstruating,
even wearing tampons.
Sensory crypts. Lorenzino Ampulae. Exhibition swimming.
Sucking fish will hold prey. Fish with them.

White out. Maseters. Albedo.
Chief jungle danger is insects.
Seek local knowledge.
Slow hot snow.
Rub the leaf on the inner wrist for 15 minutes.

Scratch and Sniff

I strode past some daffodils
and a political conference of pigeons
strutting on the ley lines, the green
of Union Square Park
to xerox the poem which
had escaped and run away on my way
to your house.

Way home I look for it, but
on this windy April it blew away
and now became Street Detritus,
Gone With the Wind.

So here's this hard done copy
promised and re-promised gone
to its admirer.

I've arranged for it to smell like
your favorite scarf. Scratch and sniff.

Zinc: Franklin and Ogdenberg, N.J.

They are not the correct colors
it's o.k. to admire like
taupe and beige. These are Day-Gloes,
gawked at, cheap, carnival,
what one doesn't like.
And they spring up in the 60s cliché
of black light, albeit shortwave ones.
In the dark, ultra-violet sucked up,
the stone's perturbed atoms strew
neon green, facetious gold, hint of
fallen orange. These rocks have secret
lives, fluoresce, have
double selves, turn from ordinary stone
to Day-Glo slash, or hot coal orange.
I gawk. I love them,
in the same category of miracle of
eggs which stand on end at equinox.

Caped: 9-1-04

“Make the world safe for poetry”
Kristin has stitched on the orange capes
worn for the BPC anti-RNC
reading where the man from Texas
stripped, broke bottles, did not
clean them up, diva of a sort.

Thin Merry wears the cape akimbo
in this stifling heat that is the later
St. Mark's do. She has
to give the cape back after.

Angel Museum

They have feet of butter, butter feet.
They wouldn't melt.
They stride 18" off the ground.

They clutch marigolds, husky marigolds,
the border bush that fights off
biting bugs and by extension sin.

They fritter petals, fitful,
and do not attend.
They are lost in glitter.
It's a constant for them,
their only permissible drunk.

Sparrows are blythe. They fly
by a string attached to their legs.
They are messengers They deliver mottoes
and gay debris.
One of the creatures glides like a skate,
the sparrows on a string like flying brown balloons.

Little vampire sucks, mosquito wings, are
sent by Gog, remind us he is there.

**Happy New Year, as
(Fortune Telling Fish) 1998**

What is the sound of a one fish bouquet?

Flap, flap, flap

Does this mean it drowns in air?

Not this one. This

is a red-fish-shaped sea

in which enveloped micro-fish

dance their little bar dances as

Homage to bar-dancing wild women

who find air their element

as best they can, and that none too badly.

They go about the business of grinding hard,

discarded peanut shells beneath their busy feet.

Their fins send signals older than the sea.

Seed Bed

I walked into the bedroom and green sprouts, dicotyledonous, were poking up through the bedspread. They were like sunflower sprouts, crisp. I pulled the bedspread back and the sprouts slipped through the cotton bedspread unchanged. I must be dreaming. It was a seed bed. This couple slept on a seed bed and under the top covers were more sprouts which lay down like velvet when pressed, sprung back, crisp. The woman of the couple walked in, smiled, and handed me a bowl in which there was a sort of cold soup made of a thin gruel, some watery skim milk and a few of the sprouts floating in it. Everyone at the party seemed to be enjoying himself, quietly or raucously as according to his nature. It seemed to be fun that the food was not particularly good tasting, but nutritious, as if it was another virtue of this extraordinary couple. "But your bed," I said, "it sprouts." "Yes, isn't it wonderful," said the hostess and laughed.

For Ignacio Quiles, 12-18-07

I put my mouth on the glass
where late your lips lay.
You sittin' in my chair all fine.
Who's been sittin' in my chair?
Maybe done time. Who knows
where the lovely tattoo on his right wrist leads.
He's drinkin' it in, my Sauza Tequila.
("Do you know what this is," I say
holding up my Black Seal rum? Bermuda.")
His thighs all hard from riding bull and slingin' it
and I'm laughin', laughin' at myself
because I know this ain't no way to behave
and not the first big house he's been in.
O me, Miss Thing, and her all tricky walk on the wild side,
me shakin' my head from side to side, slippin' the traces,
free for a while from the bit, not shocked by the jab of the spur.

Star

There isn't much time.
I run from my trainer to the Bowery.
It's casual there for New Year's Day,
the reading.
I read the untyped poem
and see Joan filming.

I wrote a poem about him,
love sounding his name in it.
When finally we are intimate, fireworks
and all,
“O.K.,” he says, “this is between us.”
He's lied, now says a girlfriend
must never know.
But, oh, Ignacio, today was the
day I was going to say the poem
with your name on it is on
YouTube.

On a Daffodil's Sneaky Blooming

I'm surprised to see my *Soleil d'or*
Trumpeting along with the Water Music
The same which played as I flew
Into dawn to France
It's a different kind of joy I
Feel than the one arriving again, so
Long detained from the Heaven of Paris
Strolling, strolling in my Harley-Davidson t-shirt, long cotton skirt
Which had the dog as far as Parisians were concerned
I have seen dreams come alive
And I have seen them hit by cars their little paws asunder
(Thud-replay, thud-replay)
It's dreams which come on little cat feet
Lick the paws. Deliberate, turn to face you, knowing
Ta geule. Ta joie juchante

3-21-97 For Victor Asaro and Jesse Weiner publishing
By the Blue Light of the Morning Glory