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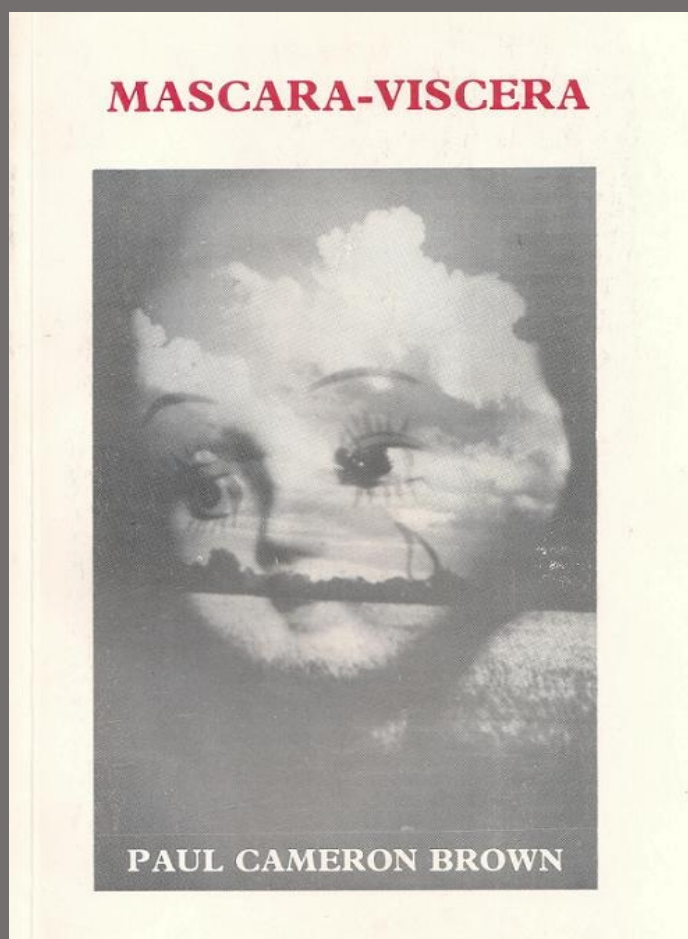
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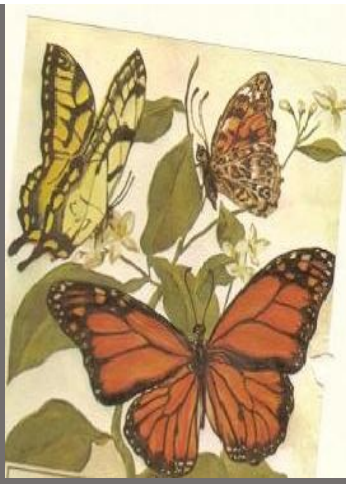
*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MASCARA-VISCERA ***

MASCARA-VISCERA

By

Paul Cameron Brown





"The voyage of the best ship
is a zigzag line of
a hundred tacks".
Emerson

CONTENTS

9	Flashpoint
10	Marzipan
11	Santo Domingo
12	White China Plates I
14	White China Plates II
15	Mail Drop
16	Headdress
17	Airbrush
18	Swords and Roses
20	Moonrock
21	Smokestack
22	Tickings of a Clock
23	Flashpoint
24	Equinox
26	Penny Wise, Pound Poor
28	Metaphor
29	Embers
30	Skin
31	Asgard
32	Old Brompton Road
33	Street Scene
34	Curse of The Downtown Trade
35	In My Books
36	Made in Space
37	Godiva
38	Peléé
39	Peléé: May 8, 1902
40	Electra
41	Sideway Look
42	Lolita Gardens
43	Unpaginated
45	Sequin
46	Yellow Hair
47	Piltdown Man
49	Spanked
50	The Crowkeeper
51	Cuando-Cubango
52	Onomatopoeia
53	At the Red Throat
55	Shamrock
56	Lost Patrol
57	Blackamoor
59	Up from the Floor
60	Men of Shade
61	Knight-Errant
63	Water Fast (The Pearl Fishers)
65	Tales of a Brave Ulysses
66	Inside Seam
68	Debriefing
70	Naiad Trance
72	Pyromania
73	Tide Charts
75	Village Idiot
76	Clippership
77	Flood

- 78 Kipper, Tea and Oranges
- 79 Tank-top
- 80 Viewer Mail
- 81 Seagulls
- 82 Imagistic
- 83 Living Room
- 84 High Roller
- 88 The Garden
- 89 Canvassing
- 90 Comments

FLASHPOINT

1

The moon has a larder
and a kitchen,
wears a nightcap
as Father in the Night Before Christmas.

2

The moon hoards pistachios,
marzipan
commands the shadows
is mustachioed
sleeps in a sloop
(at least when I look)
like the boat
owl and pussycat
took to sea.

3

And on country nights
in high summer
fishing nets seem drawn
about his face,
reveal ribbons of light,
eerie panhandlers grubbing quarters;
a sinister sailor with a sack
on a pitch black wharf.

4

Between clouds,
leafy barques
the hinge reflected on the
thick, ashen door
the moon will pirate
your senses
set them adrift
amidst twilight islands
in the mind's Outer Hebrides
where mystery is king
and the hem of robe you kiss
is an envelope pilfered.

[9]

MARZIPAN

1

A thick hole in the dark
from which
stars pour silver
as in pails
their runny divide
ink-strewn scalps
torn from the roof of the sky.

2

Padded footprints
giant ferns blooming
constellation prints,
the wind an athlete
pacing about a track
drying thru fingerprints
thin, nectarine light.

3

Sand down whitest skin

moving past your hand
a gown, mauve to green,
iceberg lettuce,
the black festering
across a ribcage;
while night arranges
moths to dusting powder
pucker-lipped
fronds from afar

4

Afar, the word a gypsy
tangled in the waves,
foam from a medicine bottle
agitated and strewn,
bubbles calculated in gasps
light into the distance
forlorn
tree-frogs, the cricket
sound round deep
--movement of night as
a rumbling in the ground,

[10]

SANTO DOMINGO

In the crypt with Columbus
in the crypt with Giovanni
of Genoa, the diaspora driven Jew;
watching flecks of the cathedral floor
jade-eyed and mica afraid
yawning down brown the abyss, his skeletal coffin
thin accae wood,
phlegm coloured
flamed ointment
of the saints
in holy water
bridging the little centuries.

2

Serpentine heavens
in coiled stars
heaving like passion fruit
hung down piano wire.

3

Meteors douse the light
of black stems,
eye holes cut of old Spanish
sailors; thin ghosts
plundering night.

4

Melange tableaux
peut-être les étoiles
sont oiseaux.

[11]

WHITE CHINA PLATES I

The moon hummed like a refrigerator,
light thru shadows
--the solitude of dusk closing in;
black scars visible across
the moon's face shaped like
mountainous hands, all
silent, the occasional leaf rustling.

2

My fork at plate's edge listening,
listening to the haunting one eye
on the staircase wall white
as the numb light outside palest night.
Caught off-guard, the musty settee
and armchair acting as hallucinogen
to the nostril, the calendar of events

playing ghostly tag with sheer curtains
hovering, shroud-like, on the family Bible
big and brown as the Lord's foot stool.

3

The unravelling tale slowly much as
thick yarn with a kitten
batting it, one event at a time
in sepulchre movement down a
linoleum floor. Two twins burning,
fever scalded in frigid water only
shock setting in, dying to join
the black creek water from which
her unwilling buckets borrowed
this liquid crucifixion and bitter vinegar.

4

Or the drive-house door, silent in precision,
unseen hands before marauding
hoofs in unison dark from windows' edge
to better hear little poke of
sleigh bells or harness rattling grim
with a sick man's cough.

5

This admission of spectral animals
somehow more unsettling than
the young woman next combing her
hair at the foot of the bed scaring
the daylights out of me picturing
the whereabouts of stockinged feet,
these tricksters from another world;
drum and kettle corps gypsy fife
with harbinger doom to rasp of
falling broom--
old and yellow silky straw witch's hair--
and a cat dark
as the Devil's very bread.

[12]

WHITE CHINA PLATES II

You could have driven
a pick-up truck
thru spokes of that moon, so big and radiant
this upended water chestnut--
ground mist weeping
in the shadows
flutter of an old woman's shawl,
the clammy smell like
a child's fingers to the face,
a little unsettling
crickets and dew in brigades
running tears on the old
shoe leather.

[14]

MAIL DROP

A boat sits on the very shallows
of a lake
in egg-cup fashion,
a tea-cosy covering waves,
orchestrating the bob of colours
in white enamel blue
inverted water.

Afar, the boat is a rasher of bacon
a strip, stripling, stipend
slicing the lake,
distancing.

The boat is an envelope
at the end of the world,

planet-sized, pea-green
about to spin crazily
into the sun at the
end of a rifle-sized
mail drop.

The boat rides amid the
between places of things,
furtive longings
where crones sit within
waiting bushes &
lizards visit skin,
dirge of teeth gnashing
the fringe canopy of
flowing leaves.

[15]

HEADDRESS

Stravinsky's Firebird,
Debussy's La Mer
tilting arrangement like a windmill
with a little Hottentot of a bird
scurrying over leaves
like hot coals,
nest a pudding arrangement,
oven-shaped,
dappled with a string.

She is alternatively
lady of the green shoots,
Empress of an Andes of twigs
for this cow-pie upended
between trees
is fortress and manor,
blockhouse and Maginot Line
careening between the branches
much as a sloth
toe ambles
across the roof of a forest
gingerly stepping on noise,
clinging to velvet footpads,
sitting between shadows
within the roar of a clearing.

[16]

AIRBRUSH

Iced coffee,
wedge of toast--
the sun poking thru
cranberry glass
delights exquisite Duchess of Berry,
her decanters & an hourglass.

Halo-hello in your fingertips
I said,
to a cadaver of light
boldly striking a tuning fork
to ring an engagement
of gold flecks
by your bed.

Limoges vase
for lace and pretty underthings
for outside the stream
steals my interest,
wearing tumbledown silk pyjamas
and a peek-a-boo smile that points
thru reed curtains.

A rustle from her chemise
and sun parasol parts green boudoir
draping shiny, black rock.

The muddle of this earth-time puzzle,

brief flutter to the eyelid's butter--
I saw match-flare
crocheted into the snake eyes
of your dress.

[17]

SWORDS AND ROSES

Some lives have themes.
Goldfish that stubbornly die;
compatibility only with distant lovers
--flowers (but no sweet-breads)
that wilt to the touch.

Waiting. Charcoal-grey cat
agreeably on a green linoleum table
with light basking in...
a tad playful,
paws up,
(classic boxer stance)
but no one notices.
Others oblique in their transparency,
are unmindful of even the empty closet
and greeting cards that smile hello.

In the dark
this room shimmers below
life-raft status;
chairs are buoys
bobbing under waves
of congealed fright.
In the morning
the first pigeons
rifle over rooftops,
mad flutterings like your eyes
stabbing gables looking curiously
like your heart.
A tree bandaged in wood
manages a feeble handshake
with sky cajoling winter.

But it is the moon,
large and eerie,
a golden earring
mindful of a Chinese panda
that plies its trade.

Mandarin-like, a snout
so cloud-entrenched
soft night barely resembles
willow and bamboo shoots
the universe left to feed her.

Nuggets or nougats?
Should I call you "opaque",
use coke-bottle glass as a
symbol of light-headedness, transparency?
Keen vision?
Could it be more is known of outer space
than your mind
or that leaves,
frosted with cold,
are conducting interviews
maliciously within the park fold?

Rather (and this is so circumspect)
no one owes anyone
in the brisk coinage and trade
that breeds human waste ...

So drivels passes as conversation,
a handshake for real investment.
A lot in common, the wrong dreams.
Pretty awareness, the desolate pennies
stumble from our hands.

More substance, really,
in the rustle of a silk dress
or static electricity
that pops over orb-sized breasts.

Hide and seek
peek a boo,
you don't need me
I don't need you.

[18]

MOONROCK

She wears a cat encrusted T-shirt
& panties with L*O*V*E
guarding the Paradise door
& when balm of night
casts shadows,
her face is moonrock
distant to mysterious
down storybook crags;
her darling form cloaked
in twilight garments
of an inky earth.

Gates of Venus,
. . . as if feline whiskers
whispered, wan cat eyes
in amber dark glowed pale honey
in alchemy or blur of soft movement
was caress to stars' elopement
with the sky.

This woman summons fire,
stokes furnaces to quicken parchment leaves
of flame-thick desire,
honed soft on ripples
skin tones were curvaceous
drift of oars, vivacious breast on buttock's
door, more moisture bead
holding regal court,
this prance down wet & downy stair.

Rain is a swift messenger
paw prints
with descent of night
where moon
becomes a plaything of
clouds' passion,
and pincushion
upward surge of
clammy earth.

[20]

SMOKESTACK

A small fish,
its colors
embers
amid the swirling water;
reminiscent of a
café in darkness--
the smokestack tablecloth fluttering
in the matchbox breeze.

[21]

TICKINGS OF A CLOCK

I began to see old lanterns, books
opening/folding within your eyes;
a pale light running as silver
to the sea.

Then crestfallen leaves dangling
as from fishhooks or the autumn moon's
skeletal lightness tossing a path
between waves over this sidewalk, that,

with the back streets passing occasional
hisses at the main culprit, night.

The prim measurement of your smile,
not the wan neglect of cool skin tones
or fabric always more suggestive
of summer colours, sideway movement
of shadow into tickings of a clock.

Rather mist and clamminess,
lipstick in a smear as a
thumbprint before the
coughing of a motorcar
as its elliptical wedge
tears darkness
away from sight.

[22]

FLASHPOINT

CHOPSTICKS

Only marginal chances
of finding a Great White
in my coffee
although the cigaret's tubular belly
is flotsam against my hand--
a dirty kerosene color, sleek & grey.

2

And stirring the embers of my cup,
suppose the grinds become primitive shark lore
of forgotten peoples or death sticks,
dry rot teeth, fathoms
squinting light.

[23]

EQUINOX

The four Equinox sisters,
the one, Fox, streaked--
all color, a blur
a Bloomingdale's on fire,
a wedge between Everest
& her fortune.

Samantha, the other
dun-coloured
earth-tide (in full bloom),
blossoms vernally & literally
busting out of her breeches with
eyes like barely sugar.
Jubilee. Fête de la vie.
Lighthouse keeper beckoning twin
shafts of warmth. Camberwell Beauty.
Rattan Bar, shooting star.

Carraciou (and castanet) an evening song,
the most buxom but with dog days & tiresome moods
flushed with heat.

Tidewater in full ripple, a
murmuring of abstract intelligence
orchestrating summer's growth.
Emerald keeper. Silken flax
beguiling smile, wiggling toes.
A stickler for detail, she was (with endless
contortions) always in the grass.

Brumaire, evaporating vapors,
the most withdrawn &
difficult to know--
a dead leaf combed thru
wind-swept hair.

Infernally inclined, a modicum
of sparse economy idly knotting ice thru
a cadaver fence before putting on a brave show--
her stern beauty and most commanding feature, snow,
shone like almonds or stars twinkling from
an anorexic fist.

Alabaster, her prison whiteness
this Brumaire.
A clock, pier,
immovable, still.

Firing up the flashlight
in the dark like
beautiful woods sleeping.

[24]

PENNY WISE, POUND POOR

Fall was a tubercular cousin
residing in the country
sparse hair,
rasping cough.

2

Night air was damaging
stringing pumpkins
around orange chains, the
milkweed pod shivering
in open shirtsleeves
little noises sifting
from burrows in her chest.

3

Fall was...
reputedly from another country
wore glaring cravats,
gold leaf and Rubenesque chain;
stalked the lark
mocked the breeze.

4

Penny wise, pound poor
leaves
a shock of hair
prematurely white
degradingly picked from
the comb
flung out fireflies
crisp bodies to singe
fire-cold light.

5

Advancing stairs
in poor light,
the season became makeshift
wallpaper
hung by tedious hands.
Little seep of plaster dirt
escaping the touch,
grass bristled by frost
where occasional flower
was torched with cold
savaged bees
stumbled from the weeds.

[26]

METAPHOR

There is a star near
the hinge of planets,
a barn under
a cow's lick of moon--
plausible people
moving thru an
airless universe.

Pay attention to the frond of lilac
. . . limestone troughs upon which
thickets of Indian scalp &
devil's paintbrush soar
to the horizon
and, afterwards,
little creeks run
with the sparrows of evening time
in step to tiny boatmen
that echo enamelled snails
from the very consonants of earth.

Rustle of leaves,
some might argue
breathless gasps
to intone the savagery
of little seasonal voices
cut off
mid-stream.

A spate of bees,
early colonizers
deflower blossoms and
strip-mine lava butter of erupting
hard-shell tulips:
such careless penetrations--
volcanic intrusions entomb
their hairy bodies caked with
the iron-lung of blackened soot petals,
each a cough drop
on the heaving breath
of a declining afternoon.

[28]

EMBERS

As you enter into dream--
its the unconsciousness
which stifles,
the thin embers
called flame
that outdistance
the controlled rubric
of desire.

[29]

SKIN

Her emerald top
phosphorescent candy glow
stick candy,
sno' cane--
floss like
the mane revealed beneath,
spun hair matted/woven into
icicle lengths & pubis mink.

Her presence as a monk sliding
under a cowl, jet-black velvet
or midnight eye-liner shadow
knotting strands of dark.

She comes on waves--
candelabra is a name
deft movement of finger
caressing storm, bare legs
shining wet street lamps
decantered ambered wine.

Cigarette floating between lips,
uncharted voyage of the smile
where puffs of smoke
are parrots' wings,
incandescent show-girls
in novelty across the flame.

[30]

ASGARD

In the ardour
of an Asgard fire
see adders from her
vinous fire per
adua ad astra.

Listen to the wind--
the ageless, intoning wind,
a sea-hag encrusted on
a mattress of waves.

Cat's footfall,
breath of fish
the flowering beard of a woman.

[31]

OLD BROMPTON ROAD

"Death is but a sleep"
quaint rationalization
even to Revolutionaries.
Think of Robespierre
holding his bleeding jaw
or Marat outside--
eyeing the inscription,
scofula no longer distracting while
tepidly emptying bath water.

2

Dreams, poetry of painting,
deathly pastel shades alongside
granite canyons
entwined with rosebuds and leaves--
bone horseshoes clanking in the dark.

3

Catch basin, drainage ditch
upon which the raspberry
parts its tendrils and
human remains, the loathing
of the living ("not dead yet..."
...appropriate obscenity:)
scrawled on one Victorian
mortuary, windows knocked out,
coffins in full view a
hand's reach away on a dare
dignitaries in a pile pried loose;
one, few years hence across
the Channel, sworn enemy
to the French.

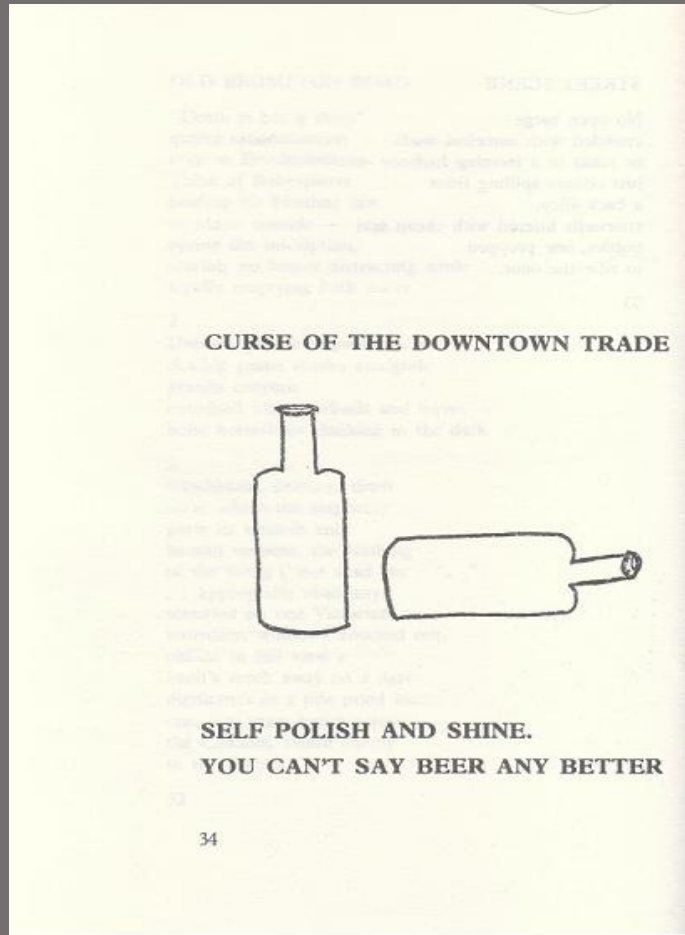
[32]

STREET SCENE

No open barge
crowded with nameless waifs
or junks in a teeming harbour--
just odours spilling from
a back alley,
stair wells littered with cheap saki
bottles, one propped
to rifle the door.

[33]

Curse of The Downtown Trade



[34]

IN MY BOOKS

The way I figure it, a number of people are
out of control at any given time ...
gin rummy & hockey notwithstanding.

Mickey bottles and varicose veins
are sure signs of indulgence
as are, proof-positive, speed-traps &
roll your own Black Cat.

Sure 'nuff, even Sunday driving stands
at the motor edge of frenzy while
Mom's apple pie is little more than just peaches & cream
home baked greed.

Take stock car racing or the trots, Little Orphan Annie
Comics or Budweiser. Vice, like charity, starts at home.

Each curtains a larger problem and self worship
begins the moment your zipper opens.

[35]

MADE IN SPACE

Mood food. In deep, deep water
without the thought of water bottom,
I thought of you.

Sous la peau rouge,
Chartreuse, I thought
of you.

Dans le cafe du paradis,

ile au emeraude.
Cascades aux ecrivisses
la belle aux Bois dormant.
Tir a l'arc, volcon.

Precious little majesty to Words
nor necromancy of place names,
ma douce.

Partout, je te vous.

[36]

GODIVA

Lingerie,
black pumps
a navel creamy enough
to drown a kitten--
the clothes assemble
in microwave fashion
--crackle of fire--
the silver pants zoom across legs
with curves so caress bound
a formula racing driver
might tumble.

As eyes rise
in jade lantern face
& hair is brushed
with all sheen aside,
the lady is more than
a Godiva
or Goldwyn-Mayer cinematic production,
this oasis of sparks,
twin peaks of McKinley-Matterhorn fame,
her calendar of words
pulling Oil of Olay
& perfumed honey thru
each studied remark.

[37]

PELÉE

The night before ...
sultry Martinique, a
tortoise shell cat
climbed, lap to pipe,
amid curbs of orange smoke.

2

Mount Pelée, a
smoking hard hat
with the candle-wax of longing
gutting in paraffin for
30,000 souls sent to the Crematorium
her harbour hissing
lava foam;
even coffee beans fused into
other metal bits, a
danse macabre twittering machine,
(nature au contraire),
tortoise shell improviso with
splotched colours weaving dawn's light
& feline crouching.

3

--the curl of her island's paws
lanced in heat,
brief wisps tugging Pelée's
synopsis (dark & smouldering), with
cat eyes glowing
up the mountain dark
into vegetative whiskers.

4

Pull of my pipe full leap of centuries

before the bite of the stem
dumped fire again

[38]

PELÉE: MAY 8, 1902

With the smile of morning
in her purse,
the dark laughter of her
cat napping
in the crevice, half-alert,
Martinique (angelique)
on padded paws
climbs from night.

I saw her hair-brush
the lava to warm the bay,
crinkle little St. Pierre
jammed into one
parking lot, volcanic embrace.

In the little museum
--the holocaust cenotaph--
Nature pared essentials to the bone,
a cauldron of smoke
peers from old photographs
to cement (danse macabre)
bric à brac ivy/stone and
coffee beans wedded
in grandeur
fission-fusion-froideur
resembling masses of bees,
grotesqueries & beards
upstaging even Miro & the distant surrealists;
where reality masked vampire fiction to
roll sulphuric heat toward belches of
St. Pierre's prison.

And Cygnet
(his name close in French to "Swan")
leg-irons)
(subterranean chamberling peeking out),
undaunted solitary survivor--
the bars on his charnel house
were the fingers of God
pointing the way free.

[39]

ELECTRA

Fantasy, Capri. The edge of a pillow.
Certain words--murmur, seashells.
A face beckoning thru time, lacy windows with
purple shades simultaneously drawn.
Tears of gold. Love signs,
glass of champagne.

A tree of hemlock nearby. A delightful print
tablecloth that signals the breeze. The courtier
in fancy dress. Twin bottles of vintage wine abreast
rider and horse.

Potables. A blue eggshell. The sun stirring Virginia Creeper
that moves in unison with the wind.

Electra and electricity, the current that prods the mind.

[40]

SIDEWAY LOOK

It's snowing and all I can think of
are leaves to wrap your memory,

leaves pungent as tea,
green curls alive
with the promise of fire,
shutes like fingers
to play a tap on your skin.

The snow is wet like your eyes at parting,
cold as the promise of a winter dawn
wet again as city-streets
I must tread to make a living,
the flask of wine
pressed to my lips.

On the winter landscape all
I see is the ghost white of sheets,
our sheets wrapped to keep breath warm
the log cannisters of our bed
a heady raft upon which to travel
to burn up an ocean of delight.

[41]

LOLITA GARDENS

A man weeps at your ankles,
climbs the stairs to peek-a-boo
panties, with finger clasps,
a Rapunzel lowering your hair,
the long-matted braids
a skilful weaver turns to gold.

An ivy forest in
a castle impregnated with doors,
the prince overhears the code
"let down your hair" and,
with perilous grasp,
mounts the stirrup wall,
foot to clasp,
searching cloud grey &
storm blasts for billowy mists
green within this empress queen.

Walking plasticine ledge
in the shower with a mermaid
soaping her perfumed treasure trove,
at an intersection within that woman,
her tulip trees explode--
faeryland syrupy,
tasting of apricot and sugar cane;
a swallow parting indigo sky.

[42]

UNPAGINATED

Orchestrating violins thru whisky sky
clouds slide like billiard balls
a Jackie Gleason - Fats Domino
ricochet off greener velvet;
my pheasant escaping snow.

Jack Ketch the hangman
in brilliant plumage,
a touch of Borgia in
long, murderous hands.

The light of Capone in
steeple-dark eyes
running like a
haunted ship
around the white, facial disc.

Offset. Bold type.
I see you through pages
of my history book
only you're unpaginated.

Unclench the fist,

watch for effervescent islets,
erotic mounds of Venus or
protuberances called Marquesas
off my left hand.

Omens are the cloth
of dreams, scissors
used to open sky.

Work out cosmic debts--
figure stone footprints on Hollywood Blvd.
en route to Tijuana for a start;
I should have been Buddha incarnate
or curator at the Hermitage,
wild shaman for the Arapaho
not a cocoa butter salesman
from New Jersey, nagging
soda-jerk in L.A.
'bout the time
of Marilyn Monroe's
quick magic.

The Almighty unpacking orange crates,
sending Florida cold
unravelling karmic debt,
brass studs in your eye
mowing suckers with your scythe;
Birthpath urge, Father Time,
de-gutting chickens at Pleasure Farms
looking to Hindoos for clues
(placing roaches on a lucky few.)

This hurdle over stones
crass fortitude ensemble,
strange melange
spewing nails,
elbows round thin pain
gutter cathedral looming into view
where there
is more viscera than mirth before
ripples of enchantment
cause vibrations at four
and the phrenology
of universal measure
is a moon
ribcage in light
--gazelle of trees
a dinosaur in height.

[43]

SEQUIN

A youthful bandit
this forest--
faltering eyelids in mud troughs
& puddles like
brisk lies
woven thru deception.

Stealing autumn into
its colours,
leaves in birchbark rustle
a full mauraude stealth
across every breeze.

Thief, thief
elf with a key,
a thousand rasping angels
their throaty javelins
hurled from branch's edge,
brief pageant robbing
summer's pantry.

Offal of the fall,
the lake a sequined glove
tossed from a careless hand;
a rowboat as a buckle
chromatic foam
for a finger's fan.

YELLOW HAIR

With that lime green hairnet
 commonly used by butterfly dispatchers--
 something your aunt might have commandeered
 to put her hair up donkey's years ago,
 I unjarred the bottle of air &
 with a pair of forceps
 tried to wrangle the life juices
 from a Polyphemeus[1] in a manner akin to Ulysses
 in that cave three millenia ago;
 his gentle bleating like the whine
 of the net across the gelatin fabric
 of air or the flash of a tomahawk gliding
 across Custer's golden hair.

[1] Large buff silk-moth with two eyespots on the hind wings named for the giant Polyphemeus in the Odyssey. Ulysses had the giant blinded with a sharpened pole.

PILTDOWN MAN

Popping out of the dark
 reddish "Merry Christmas" haze
 twinkling blinking land of Nod (or
 rather it's Ned, the hefty trucker);
 eyes, steel-belted radials,
 in a rig big like Santa Claus;
 a Stegosaurus
 swinging sabre-toothed tail
 & flexing padded paws
 to gobble night.

Loads so dreary-weary their chrome-plated
 swamps are debris after a tank battle
 for troglodyte trilobites &
 chocolate coloured ooze
 belching brown down funnel flaps
 to carve deep bellows inside earth.

Such energetic slaves
 to cough & sound their
 wheezing sandy blasts make for
 breaks in a clearing
 for I see our trucker,
 eons from now,
 wedded to sentiment and rock
 perfectly preserved (to the dismay
 of future inhabitants), a fossilized
 remnant complete with
 steering wheel embedded in his chest
 (forlorn and anatomically correct much as
 dolls used in assault cases).

In a vision,
 envisage his life
 replete to the last Raggetty-Anne detail
 --straw-coloured hair, for one,
 looms like binder-twine or
 horse-hair thread tugged from a dirty mattress
 which props a toque or baseball cap,
 tobacco staining the resident
 gum chewing Neanderthal
 with tartan lumberjack shirt.

Contact with Piltdown Man,
 soggy Homo Erectus
 given to gunning engines,
 churning rubber as cavemen
 might in the
 La Brera tarpits.

Consider a farmer
 brief centuries ago

stumbling onto a similar scene
pocketing no cloverleaves
of his own pasture's making
but concrete expressways
looming thru the fog
& damp, then
coming to his senses,
hard-pressed as I.

[47]

SPANKED

Buying up egg rolls at 50¢ a kick,
they royally entered our bloodstream
--a riot of sensation
akin to dynamite caps
kicked off in the brain.

Later, sitting in the booth
a chocolate brown wall
to aid the digestion;
a frumpy waitress
plunks water down
to complete the feast.

Taken back, the surcharge
at such festivities exorbitant,
we squander in exact change
the full price to do it again.

[49]

THE CROWKEEPER

"she gallops night by night through lovers' brains...."

I see grindstones in the sky,
pots of tulips overturned
--big tug of the reins
and chestnut hair
is seen before the windowpane
with chance & more chance lost to
frost or hungry bees
this still autumn eve.

Darling,
walls that division us
are envelopes of passion
bridging trust, seal it
lest it rust.

Skeletal scrapings
make for poor bedding
(this poor rhinoceros of lies)
the devil gliding about so disguised
on his tentacle and toenail chair
(inviting lair) or is it
hiccup and bandaged prayer
yet stalwart wall is a rosary bead
thick ale and bread to hungry snail
or, better, lips to Romeo's blushing pilgrims.

Then, sudden, I'm old--
on a bench counting stars
where each is a radiant patch of energy
leased to the dark,
an emblem burst mailed from eternity,
spark to cigaret's flame
to burn these little suns
as cupid tails; your "bright eye, scarlet lip,
fine foot, straight leg
and quivering thigh."

[50]

CUANDO-CUBANGO

Moths, if they dream dusk,
sport esurient hip-flasks on their wings--
gangster rum-runners better to sully dark,
traverse caravans of colour
amid silk-routes
to dazzle Prester John,
cork unscrew the unicorn horn askew.

2

Compte de la Mothe
escadrilles/flotillas
D'Entrecasteaux
with Bougainville discovering
well, Bougainvillaea and I,
latter day la Perouse,
cunningly amuck on coral
adoration and wine,
(red as scarlet leaves)
chenille, frangipanni and the Marquis house colours
of the flame-bitten tropics.

3

Let me scandalize why.
Watch the sea churn
to white bubbles then coat
your nostril with brine
to run a finger
down brown skin passing
for the Bronze Age.

4

Notice the invention of sun,
a cloak suspended
in a canopy-canoe profusion
(left over from the first dawn,)
oasis of calm,
patter of motes and beams.
Garden of Shalimar.

5

My sentiments exactly.

[51]

ONOMATOPOEIA

One thing about this type of education, it certainly taught an individual to be philosophical about death.

He could ruminate conversably on the ultimate fate of a Greek shade or the Mesopotamian interpretation of the underworld. Even contemplate figuratively what Achilles felt was his true funeral abode.

Shoel. The grave. Romantic poetry might have little practical application but it was great conversational stuff.

A book or two by obscure authors sure broke the ice at parties, was unbeatable verbal jousting.

Too bad the joke was on him for majoring in it.

Few people really cared what onomatopoeia was or that Presquile was in Maine. Worse, they acted like you were nuts for studying the Aeneid. The Aeneid! It did, too, have importance. Literature, that is.

Why it gave a man depth, a presence, a gracefulness that transcended petty, material strivings. Too bad, one couldn't show the white palms of one's hand for a living or revel in soft flesh as the natural mark of a born aristocrat. O tempora, oh mores: that the classics had fallen so low.

It was maddening that literary civilization was within a hair's breadth at being snuffed by the ordinary convention of task bearing.

Being a poet, so basic to everything, didn't even show up on
Manpower's computer scan.

The universities didn't care they were having the times of their
lives parsing verbs and conjugating declensions, telling
graduates "the pendulum will swing".

The best retort for that was the pithy epigram of the working
man toiling in honest sweat within the secure bounds of a trade.

[52]

AT THE RED THROAT

In youth, Death was
a puny boy possessing but
wormy hands & fleshless fingers
as in Witch Hazel
or Scrooge's Future Ghost
--that insipid Evil One
Hansel so easily outwitted
in a gingerbread house.

Time brought increased notoriety.
Saucy times with a soupçon of respect
for the artful dodger.
Givens change, an armful of
orange lilies, limp & loathsome,
on a tombstone door
before trumpets of rain.

Graven images. Lifeless stone.
Death became stone.
Stone empty. The maggot emptiness
burrowing into chiselled easel and
the stone-cutter's savage magic.
Just a bitty stone
to herald a passing.

Night-jars.
Old straw-chairs with
a broom pronouncing
the wall base with its touch empty,
the empress of bandages
leaning to rags

on table scraps,
sorry gloom of an old building
by a pickled lake
leaking into ebb twilight.

The coronation of the nightmare,
the moon with her billowing robes and withered spoon
unfolding midstream ...
la cauchemar ou
dénudée soirée
to discover, with wonder, ices with sherbet
reek like nightsweats;
a windsail of pooled light
thru puddles of trees.

Brackish backwater--
thoughts of black ice
and huddled masses of silver
breaking thru the sun's
winter curtain as erupting coins.

[53]

SHAMROCK

Is there anything prettier than that--
to stare into your manifold spaces
toward the hook & vine
of cathedral leaps,
the vaults & crypts
as go-betweenes of an earthy worship,
the supine female form?

By quiet pools,
thrush in the thicket
with red berry behind its eye,
miniature sun
proceeding by the branch
to undress the bark
with leaves as
passionate culprits
kissing dark.

Clasped hands
upward lies the sky
my masterpiece angel,
I bite lush meadows,
tread spongy brooks,
endear daring small of back,
crevice taste nape and neck,
a beatific pilgrim nearing
a fleshy way-station,
first charting his compass,
fathoming a probe
to collect armfuls of starlight &
shade, hair, eye, lip like fragrant sea-grape
--pine & cedar bough in love-lorn resin smile.

[55]

LOST PATROL

Blue walls were grottoes,
subterranean panels
for covert messages, the
occasional mot juste
squirrelled up thru paint & memory.

Something like guitar strings dangling
only you employed
tear sheets from Rolling Stone
(counter-culture fly paper
to catch the runny masses).

The blue walls existed as
firing ranges, gunpowder
plots for ideas scribbled
on pencil waves
like the movement
of snakes (or commandoes
on their bellies) thru
desert sand.

Blue walls. Blue grottoes.
Blue moods to temper finger oases
(tap-tap of skeletal tree on your window pane)
crawling thick with pregnant fruition
with the bayonet lull of words.

Snippets of that legacy (hobnailed like a
lost patrol)
forlorn as yellowing pages
or dusky petals unfolding.

[56]

BLACKAMOOR

Breaking up--
as in the cloissoné jar you dropped. . .
little regard,
a few brittle pieces scattered about the floor.
Let's call it "shedding feelings". Expensive?
There's always another humidior tucked away in
the cranny of another antique shop; after all,
a woman is only a woman
although a fine, Cuban import
is a worthy smoke.

"What this country needs is a good 5¢ cigar".

Panatellas?
He might have added tight-fitting, long lasting.

Nooks & crannies.
Little things, your ways. Fruit fly (perhaps damsel wing)
as symbol of perishability. My emblematic coat of arms.
No season of regrets, rather
snatch of minutes, the oasis span of a single candle.

Who knows?
The sun nudging petals
at the close of another day.
Your eyelids casting shrouds (and shadows),
the long funeral walk of your hair across the pillow.
Then awakening. You gathering tresses much as a bird trilling
feathers.
Clandestine, these
rendez-vous' Clementines.

Air of mystery and melancholy street,
the moon up & poking
holes in my argument.
Tedious fingers,
no account
matter of factness
lasting eternities.

Imagine, you & this moon,
dowagers together crotchety,
decades hence, making tea.
Curls of black leaves, grumbling.

Blackamoor and sadness,
cult king of empty
transforming the bright & ruddy
complexion into barely honourable dishwater.

You can ask what this means.
A cough. Twirl of spoon
in a cup, deafening answers.

I prefer the lonely
wine bottle,
egret in flight & motion,
retaining dignity across
a crumpled, brown bag.
Listless, linoleum floor.

[57]

UP FROM THE FLOOR

They sit in silence. In camera, around the table. Terrifyingly
stern, stares that grew antlers in my eyes.

It was as if thunder or bolts with electricity were being decreed.
The self-important, the pompous, well-fed and self-assured.
Here to hazard a fling of the dice--to decide whether another
should eat.

Employment. The interview. One with yellow tusks protruding
to his coffee cup. Eyes, some primordial forest cut for a
firebreak back of his soul. And I think of the desperate, those
lacking bus-fare to get to such a carnival. Valuable postage
money, photocopying, scrimped dollars for a suit to entertain
the pumpkins dicing for a worthless garment. A scavenger run,
piles of white applications heaped as bones in a graveyard made
careless after a violent storm.

Or elephants in tow, trunks wrapped around the other waiting
for the ringmaster to signal the question important; whether
a neophyte new at sharpening his teeth at a daily wage should be
allowed presence onto such a hallowed ground.

And I think such things are the very matter of evil--that these
are vile intemperates with their accursed shortlists deigning to
be gracious, shaking hands after the fact. Mafioso manners, the
sickly grins back of the shovels used to bury another.

[59]

MEN OF SHADE

All the candles are passing out, one by one.
They have evaporated their brightness,
overpowered limpid cracks in their own flames, seized
the outpouring air with hesitant breath to brave
a flicker of new hearth while knocking holes against
the warm men decorating fireside shade.

[60]

KNIGHT-ERRANT

A well-thumbed book
like a well-thumbed life,
"whilst you walk this earth"
yet nothing is "afoot",
as so many small boys
throwing stones through the funeral parlour
glass door.

A cake-walk? Being alive and interacting
across the face of the multitude is terrible
algebra running into unfathomable sums.
"Doing your sums", my grade school teacher
used to say and I still am. Whippersnapper,
learning lessons in a strange stamina
sort of way.

One of the multitude died last night &
is now "resting" in a large, Victorian parlour.
Even the walls grimace. I went by, caught a peek
at the assemblage chasing thru rain to see his
last hurrah. Look, "parlour" can be deadly serious
even if ice-cream and pizza attach dead-pan humour
to the term. Imagine, picking the last day of the
month to go packing. Finale.

"Going down to the sea in ships". Death as voyage escaping
prison confines of the harbour. Cliches donate dim glimpses
into the apparent.

One sees a lot by the moon.
Crisp, fall air and
leaves yellowing
frightened from their wits
to end their brief, balloon walk. Such
faraway faces of Eve and a boat
moored to a dock.

Crossing streets --
a gray, fusillade church,
knight-errant, breaks the night.
Trees chuckle in coves through wispy clouds.
Madonna's face in a shawl only it's not on the
stained glass window I see her. She seems
to be pouting. Ashamed of what we have to go through
at the end of this filth and stupidity? Restrictions?
Death lifts them in one heave of the casket. More illuminating
are the mourners. Dashing thru the sleet in brief poignancy;
shrill, old voices that knew the deceased reciting
what can only be the obvious. Leaden eyes that cast no shadow.

Hardly analogous to being "called home" or "going to their
reward".
More light is cast by the street lamp, the pale glow of fireflies
and neon signs winking-drinking waves like the fisherman's
cork.

This place is holy to me. A shrine. Night air with mist
collecting,
watching flames shuffle over hearth-stones; leaves mount a
glade.

The bitterest berry, flower to lily of the valley. A heart that
makes gravelly noise. Tiny angel spread of petals, no black
funeral vestments for me.

Standing close to the clock and thinking.
A luxury bought with time,

in every evening weeping in the corner.

[61]

WATER FAST (THE PEARL FISHERS)

Shopping in their heads
--a man a pair of shoes
right colour (tan, off-white) shape--
only good physiques need apply,
degree, tall;
self-confidence a "must".

Not yuppie, really,
more consumerism as in
I made the grade (she really
thinks this; meanwhile, she's
plump, dull).

Standing in the showroom window,
she spies the mirror image of herself.
Your attitude is your altitude.
Of course, he's "polished"
(tho' not worn), urbane
witty--this goes without saying.
Well-travelled, maybe, though potential
liability, here, suggestive of footloose.
Restless. Perhaps given over to bouts
of hedonism--a dangerous portent.

Feel I've stumbled back in time,
holding court with Cesare Borgia,
Lorenzo the Magnificent significantly
transformed to a Renaissance courtier.
Harpsichord and madrigal in hand (& head,),
I recite my litany.

I pack a mean wallop--
humour, I mean,
for no one on this spic 'n span
planet wants somebody too droll.
Intensity is a ripple from the sixties.
"Relationship", kickback to the after-glow
on-glow seventies.

Eighties women love "feedback",
"interfacing". Its fashionable to
think chic. Restless troubadours
should be dyed in their own ilk.
Sporty chaps are in demand, ones
with visceral longing for babies &
the peroxide smell of Javex in
diaper pails wafting thru their nostrils.
Heady brew, Perrier & BMW types.

Chrome-plated men with the
razzle-dazzle of the Boardroom
tugging at their cufflinks.
Mutual funds equates with mutual interests.

The man's wishes?
A dollop of Dijon mustard on you!
Hitting the nail on the head.
Holding up her middle finger
to dry nail polish, I see
my future and, golly,
does it ever shine.

[63]

TALES OF A BRAVE ULYSSES

Artists (astrologers never lie)
are birthed when
Venus is rising--
not against cat's whelp
(eye of newt, tongue of frog)
calamitous mist or London fog;

far, ferny forbidding fenn.

When Venus rises, yes
dons Botticelli's cloak
or was it her hair
gathered in tresses
long by lovely handfuls
parading it all
on a patty shell
--her twin oysters ambrosia
a Ulyssean mirroring winedark sea,
purpling color of a robin's egg.

Artists are born
in something of Venus . . .
conceived along coral-coral
highway lariats, foam
of passion
modern cowgirl
lowering the drapes.

[65]

INSIDE SEAM

Having wilderness cracks
in emotional facades
chinks within
to let cabins in.

2

Porous wind
examining pavement,
foot-sore maybe loose
winding entrails
of our hearts
into lavatory paper;
would that it pleased
riddled trees
--more whistling,
poked holes
across oasis tracks
wandering spaces.

3

Blistering thought,
paint flecks
chipped in the mica-afraid
heat of wan-ton passion;
(acknowledging debts to Chinese cuisine)
a wan smile
left from which
I pretend to remember all.

4

Love-smitten
to lend
the reach of your arm--
sighs,
droop to
hips heaving
a droll verandah
(like curtain's edge
across the exhausted wall).

5

Besmirched stain,
The lavender hoop
of your belt is a winding lizard's skin
or perspiring rope
to anchor the filmy edge
of letters written,
not sent.

The breeze,
quiet wind--
a chipmunk
with woodchips
poked into a grin.

DEBRIEFING

I won't envy the heat this August.
 The fall (English say autumn)
 burrowing like urinating dogs
 thru trees,
 carrying winter woolies
 with sniff of air
 crisscrossing the lion's tamer's
 path I must trod
 when snow hits.

2

No, I won't envy searing blasts
 be they inclement
 weather or lost souls
 bargaining with rain.
 Acceptance . . . they say
 is the key
 and the word clangs like chimes
 into my biology, a grandfather clock
 to my own chamber music, a
 little something to cheer and
 serenade the buffeted spirit.

3

Think still thoughts in gloomy houses
 when petals cry burst in springtime.
 This is done in preparation
 for brighter moments
 ecstatically greeting
 November chill,
 devouring the last chestnut,
 cursing wheat-cakes over
 winter's fire.

4

A pleasant page
 crammed in the tumbler briefcase
 carrying my life's thimble,
 rocketing toward
 a brilliant destiny
 all 4 seasonal planets
 orchestrating mood;
 the patch quilt procupine
 quill emotion tapestry
 working overtime like
 a fish hook thru
 brain's inner eye, ocular
 hair shirt pulled on
 at warning's glance
 to trigger the way I boil eggs;
 devour slivers of wood
 on learning another day
 kicks ass from
 the horizontal pillow.

NAIAD TRANCE

The leaves on their trumpet flames
 Richter scale inside pulse stems--
 into the gorge, la gorge
 throat and crevice
 of the canyon arroyo.

Walking the slit
 into rheumatism earth
 the twilight pain
 of Paleozoic ice,
 Jurassic Age
 whence rupture
 sculpted rock

River precipice
 the afternoon dangling like shadow

beside taiga sun
lost to dark & rain
toward the water now,
ever, and chemical rushing sound.

Chameleon, I would swear
this journey was that,
worse, sorceress on my emotions;
I left pathways contoured with Merlin rock
& trees like Babbitt refugees
from the Nahanni,
fearful Dogrib aboriginals
swarming my imagination
their scalp-locks loaded for bear.

Arabesque boulder,
lavender curls of winter-wind swept moss and
berets of tiny, dead soldiers. The
moisture between
you and clearing.

Hushed forest
an envelope edge
of moisture patterns,
more leaves
in reindeer formation
asserting themselves
in beckoning sleighs and
trance of veined, elfin hand
skirting cracks & fissure gloom.

[70]

PYROMANIA

She had a fireplace--
the sexual kiln
of her pyromaniac
desire,
a brick embedded in heat,
white hot coal to ember,
her lust flaring red,
soot to powder
dark as charcoal
smear, a walk
across shimmering mirror.

[72]

TIDE CHARTS

To create dream--
the pearl thru wine effect,
oil and vinegar viscosity
of giant salad leaves
basking on the
broken picnic table
like so many lemurs
taken to a
Malagasy forest.

Liverwurst on rye,
cuff-links drag
the hard, mica table;
so, why be afraid
'cause spume from waves
glows upward
in so many trails of
grey-laden smoke?

This island looks like a loaf,
a dot or mole on inviting cheeks,
to me; so wary, invariably, of land
(and perhaps the Sand Man)
amongst all those wandering eyes,
especially the sea-scape,
curl of snake
illuminated

in a sudden, tropic shower.

See the sudden bandanna of rock
squeezed so tight by
shore's edge that a
grim hammer of stones
intones a warning?

Its back from the wars
to dive, there, among
threads of water
where needle eyes of little
fish ("young fry of treachery")
are so scalpel-like
dunes and eddies
of living colour
shake you.

To slake a thirst.
For adventure.
For precision.
Try a lavender roll of water
curved in bite recess
much as a conch's outer shell
dons triple-ripple effect.

Up the stakes. Skillets off the
meandering edge are pounding
undertows and riptides resemble
porters in foreign airports
who simply smile. . .

Purple dye
on white toga,
water retches up
on land.

A necklace, this activity, in warm shallows.
Consciousness raising--reef life coming
into contact with the bumper edge to freedom.

Heavenly bodies
parry light from the moon,
wrath from a deeper bellows
cough up one hand
raised in silver mourning.

[73]

VILLAGE IDIOT

Dodder capitulates on his bum,
skulks under fence posts
a twitch of Timothy weed prying
apart his massive lips.

A strip of lavatory paper
his golden rule; the
merrie lad bakes ready made
surprises to the jowled response
of his parting brains.

The mastication of shoe laces
on tired leather jerkins akin
to grinding Michelin rubber--his
reedy voice in overbite haste
rounding corners like a club-footed
dog travelling edgewise
from his master's sight.

[75]

CLIPPERSHIP

Pausing to see
light thru chinks
the corner door
battered barn floor

musty webs and pebbled face
expect shadows from
flecked dust, yet
damsel flies
with doily edge
blanket the air
a throaty radiance
in angel hair
and stepping stones to
nearest crevice
and laddering place.

[76]

FLOOD

White ermine/white semen,
green eyes jade from the night.

Eternity falls in sparrow,
an inch-worm down
a pear-coloured leg,
within this droplet
lies coiled raptures
of a snake,
anointed coils
musky as in woolen handshake
where tributaries turn into socks
wrapped to the vertebrae clasp
of a teenager's leg.

My fingers are
frying skilletts
slow-boiling water, with precision,
your rivers & chasms,
a vagina white knuckle rafting
across your enchantment.

[77]

KIPPER, TEA AND ORANGES

Our lives evaporating as we talk,
flypaper from cosmic ceiling--

We gather stardust,
mnemonics, perhaps,
re-arrangers of mystic twigs
into a pattern.

Look to the sky,
les nuages, l'ombre
les arbres alla primavera
"magnificio", said I
with real relish &
snap of ring-encrusted fingers,
distant God, not quite Himself,
behind a podium exiting the band shell.

[78]

TANK-TOP

I was playing sonatas on your skin--
no beauty & the beast scenario
though the Tower pulchritude was intact
with enough purple agape grape leaves
and ivy for a fig-leaved Eve
with wind wet at the windows
(and later the willows),
where gravelly, cloven hooves became party
to my thoughts; for you,
blessed with a triangular patch,
--and something like strawberry--
lay moist & woven into strict tapestry

like a mantle covering
abrupt oasis of skin
(the better to peer in).

I scaled the heights
not castle vaults, mind you,
but the elevator shaft and draw-bridge equivalent
of a white charger--
fierce visor in place
--armour gleaming--
a sabre rattling at my side
be-jewelled & twinkling
the key clinking
there, to corner distance
(time & space)
dragons to be dirked and slain.

Fiery eye, forked tails
donut-sized scales
plastered as a calendar
or shingler might a tiled roof
--the empty spell
Bellerophon spying his Lady in a belfry
on driving home.

[79]

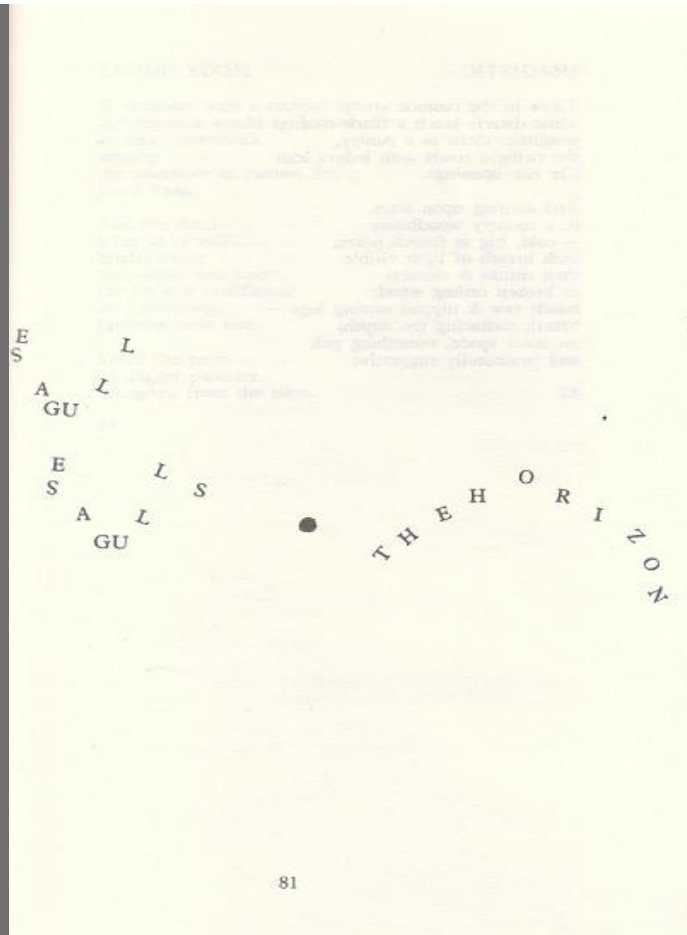
VIEWER MAIL

The sky was
a ringed net of honeyed light,
(colours from peeled apples)
funnelling cloud ...
tumbler over dice
(the carrot throat
lemonade pie)
twin coins in a fountain
brief lantern spark amid
twittering noise.

The trees were awaiting giants
gathered to fumble about the river
noiseless bridge
and, I, skyscraper man
dangling a reflection,
(afternoon tea)
muddy me
Jimbob expression
water angling for dirt.

[80]

Seagulls



[81]

IMAGISTIC

There in the cosmos--
white dwarfs launch a black rooftop
imagistic, clean as a pantry,
the twilight roads with ledges lean
like raw openings.

And coming upon stars
in a country woodhouse
--cold, big as frozen pears,
each breath of light visible
thru chinks & clusters
of broken ceiling wood;
hands raw & nipped sawing logs--
breath menacing the depths
on inner space, something pale
and profoundly suggestive.

[82]

LIVING ROOM

If anatomy were a contact sport,
the stomach would be a football
estomac, hammock
sagging
the container of riotous living
pried loose.

And the head--
a barrel of nails,
binder-twine
unravelling into knots;
the brain a cauliflower
for flavouring,
precious little else.

Spare the heart
its dagger pleasure

inveighed from the start.

[83]

HIGH ROLLER

1

Terrorism--
left-wing nerd (twin
grapefruits in his hand
gives it away)
winging a stiletto shoe,
spitting on an ashcan
to bring up a bruise or two.

2

Visions are steadier--
I see in the shimmer
blue veins to target,
a silhouette of the rich,
fur wraps in their Bentleys
time to bring up tar,
kick ass in Knightsbridge
with my holiday bomb blast.

3

Bag snatching can be dangerous
let go if you don't want to be
dragged over cobbles behind a Vespa.

4

The Harrod's sign, "please keep
moving" meant business.

5

Pretoria calls as does Manila.
Later, perhaps, Jerusalem, Beirut,
Rawalpindi.

6

Closer to home (I am of the Red Army
faction) is the Bologna train station.

7

Counting hours down
my button line,
three less than
pay-off, squeakily clean.

8

London seems indifferent
to my destiny; even the
tube buskers and streeties
see not a harbinger
but another shuffling
cold-assed long hair.

9

The wired whisky bottle
in the airport locker
will make La Guardia look to
the Statue of Liberty for deliverance,

10

I'll send the Hotel Crillon
so far up the Eiffel
they'll have to sandblast
the sky.

11

My mentors
spic 'n span boys
no wild-eyed radicals
with socks that won't stay up,
rather gumless wizards
taking Confederate rain,
mainlining a little
to keep the nerves steady,
orders direct from Moscow
with money laundered a bit,
beats haphazard work and

petty contracts on local businessmen.

12

Cells (I like the word)
master-mind
co-ordinate and synchronize
revolutionary inter-cooperation.
A swine in Munich
is the same swine
without his leather jerkins
in Santiago.

13

Brains coming apart
on soles of shoes
a pantheon of causes to choose,
let's see, neo-revisionism
counter-revolutionary
criss-crosses with
degenerate bourgeoisie
capitalist turncoat,
(both must die)
the urgency lies in
which commands my
holier dross.

14

Brothers in the struggle
need empathetic eyes
to square off
the titanic quarrel.

15

Cleanse the body politic,
reads one directive.
Rub not ointment but horse radish
over decomposed, societal skin,
a brisk cleansing with your strigal
but one revolutionary application.

16

"De-stabilize", the latest buzz word
flies to the manure heap
just kick in the door--
those planter's peanuts
know the score.

17

"Property is theft"
I'm lisping in the burning sun,
Ethiopia done
Tigré and Eritrea
key components
on the Horn's chessboard,
mere human paste
re-patched, re-worn.

18

Ditto, "take-out", liquidate.
Run a new poker thru the rubble. A good
anarchist's cathedral accomplishment
is the chicken coop's destruction.

19

Make the rich pay.
Squeeze the goose to the pips.
All power to the people;
a gun run
is a good itch,
works up a powerful thirst
for Justice;
good mercy disguised
brother Lenin
as a simple dock worker,
the plague-bacillus quickens.

20

Orange filaments of smoke
are better than the factory whistle,
a good arsonist recruits
his own flames,
fans his own fire.
The crackle of desire

over hearth stones
is reward enough in itself.

[84]

THE GARDEN

And like a cobbler at a bench
I return to my musings
why Kensington Gardens
with its grand, theatrical entrance
is gateway to London's poor
--why the stiff Victoria and Albert
monument or grand canopy
to the Hemispheres
has a bison for the Americas
or sultry elephant of
Asia fame
(India being the brightest
jewel in the Empress' crown);
why other archetypal animals at their pleasure
are carved in gleaming milk white
when the rich at their
leisure, to and fro,
dine elegantly as tight
buds arranged on a stem.

2

I've not mentioned the poor
come to the Serpentine
a little ways up in Hyde Park
only to be chased out
of Kensington at closing--
the cobbler at his bench,
croupier at Whites,
the elephant as a hatchet beast
run amuck
in the stellar pool
of the eye's fixed poor.

[88]

CANVASSING

And I thought of things,
things that come in small clutches,
tiny memories,
thoughts evoking the
approach of time or
footsteps about to open graves.
More things than the troubled
single entities we attach to them;
things marbled with the elasticity of rain,
rumours of war, pitch black leaves in the
bottom of a pond where the whelp of a dog
tries to outrun night.

[89]

COMMENTS

...unrestrained, imaginative writing.
Brown's magic is the vibrating universe,
his sympathy is his ability to receive these vibrations.
Sympathetic Magic captures the movement of life in its intervals--
his poems resemble stopped action
photographs from a film.

THE TORONTO STAR

...the poetry is fine... rewarding reading...
Almost every poem in Sympathetic Magic
boasts an admirable image or two.

Brown can write, without a doubt.

POETRY CANADA POESIE

...wry humour.

The poet revels in image and can use it well.
Paul Cameron Brown is capable of interesting,
even arresting work.

CANADIAN BOOK REVIEW ANNUAL 1985

Le voyage exotique devient parfois fantastique...
Se plonger dans les pages de "Sympathetic Magic", c' est
partir pour un autre monde oil Paul Cameron Brown
envoute par les mots et les images.

DIPLOMATIC OBSERVER

[90]

Biography

Previous titles by Paul Cameron Brown include fiction, poetry,
chapbooks, illustrations and broadsheets by a number of Canadian
and American presses.

". . . A master at evoking mood and atmosphere" The London
Free Press

". . . Beguiling writing indeed" The Canadian Author and Bookman

The End

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