



Versuche: 04

Little Orphan Animal
[c. 1994]

The Great Expectations

are withering
fast, are slowly
on time in
reaching their proper
denouement, strange
French place. It
is Wednesday, great
perspir-

ation is gnawing at
my head, round
robing me in
a halo of smelly
aether; where
are you, Ezra
Pound,
these loud nights when

a romance like
yours would
be
welcome (even if
W.H. Auden ruined it
all for
me!) Great
it could be, life
as a lung, mind, and *sicher*
eye, grand

like a role stood up
straight at attention.

Chinatown

its
streets make little
“sense” so
I thought about
Barthes, how
I put
to the gun would
“explain” him

not! so
to come off as
some long-haired
Victorian
freak, in
my diligence I

have much to
own up
to, as
my library, stuffed be-
yond equilibrium, so
society so-so
and hermetic no no
good at
it This

is
a confession that
I was lost
lost lost
in my
colorful
glasses

in Chinatown

The Storm

The storm rages
sadly, as the
night becomes

a memory:
books
are littered everywhere: a-

mazing that
the night
becomes known
at all!
storm

and rotting window
bearing the thrusts
barely
that the timpani
of the storm is in my room

and the
pages
blown o-
pen
how
to conceal them?

a camera, perhaps

The Host

And now I
take you
into my room: victim
of my
 lost
consequence:

parlor
games
to attract you teas
straight from
China

poems from hell: the
radi-
ator
hisses (I
 assure
you that
it likes
you): you speak

up

you speak up

you are
welcome my
guest

my trays are all
yours
before the divorce

Truly I Do

The conver-
sation
fades, and
the room
empty, o-
blique

The cross
momen-
tary, blood
re-
laxed in-
to its grace.

Into its standard grace
the body conforms
a plastic mode on
the
sideline
returning the glances

plasticine
it is a whim
and how one covers it

This
body that
I
house
evanescent a
dream that is
purchased by chance

dance prance

full as one
honors
it

locked in-
side its
own key

Poem 33

Night wins me
its game of
chess: that
image from a
film: that
night so un-
inspiring with
its images!

*

And talks
and talks and talks: banter
of an
irrepressible
instinct for
survival: e-
ven in these
dark
times.

*

Night you
know me too
well: how
I am never
one
to raise an ob-
jection to compromise: that
I take
what I
get.

*

Night you
continue like
a gossip: con-
demned
on the
 streets for
mis-
information

but always one
for *friction*.

*

 Escape:
the holi-
day on
Mars sounds
good to
me these days.

*

The horror one
feels when
confronted with a globe
of happi-
ness that
merely is a light
show, or
worse
a poster from MoMA

*

that sen-
sation creeps
over me

these times when
words are
merely
fashion at the mall or
a di-
vided conscience

on what the peace-keeping mission is doing these days.

*

Night you
coughed go
build an ig-
loo

cruel
cruel heart, make
your dis-
guise

one that never fools
a wheedling kid.

*

For what is happening
for what is lost

and take
from the
poor and
rich their
circum-

stances and
 reply, in the
end that
what
follows

is invariably real.

Little Orphan Animal

The telephone won't
ring, nor the

mailbox be
filled with
 postcards
from loves
Gloomy! walls

containments, these
flat surfaces, of
my
images

scratched out in
the heat of
a
 passing
moment
governed by anxieties...

Walls words
learning me, I'm
goin' to get
 some
learnin'! from
these things

diligently arrayed
to a code
of fluttering wings

“vans
beating the empty

air” you
say? I

dare you to find
so much in Paul
Klee, as
a rigorous assignment!

I dare
you to
toss the dress
of your *finesse*
and claim something under it
A

plan, a
scapegoat, I
am ordered to
retreat
at each new second
that warrants redress

and take
nothing
from it

Nonetheless, the
curb
was
delightful
and carved in glass

Free to be Yu and Mee

What would
a poem like that be
like? the prayer
asks the charlatan
It would
on a calm afternoon, in winter

be much like the peaches, in spring.

*

Thence would spring
a squadron of declarations, would
the room fake the pallor of winter

that the prayer be
no silence that would
be mistaken for a prayer.

*

I mean it a prayer
but rococo spring
interrupts those solemnities that would
could it (and would
it) distil from the powers that be
its necessary, finite hold. It makes a winter

that feels like winter:
progressed, entirely, without a prayer.

*

What's to be-

come of spring
and the Bermudas that would
be ours, and beyond momentary, would

there be the option? There would
be winter
as there would
even if one not
 memorized the prayer
for its
opacity.
One asks that a spring
be simple, direct, and provident... that it just be.

*

But nothing will be
if there is a would
to disturb it: the roads, the spring
won't contain it.

 One rejects winter:
it brings one to sleep... and always to prayer.

This monotone is both: what would

*

that the prayer be
the would that would
make spring of our winter.

This Is A Product

Maybe – just
MAYBE, tell me
in the growth of
this eye
this eye that is colorless...

the corners
are
dank
with neglect, a
February sky
neglects them

The
story, gross
with reprobation, huh!
the Kafka
figure, the
Lowell, snot-
ty nosed!

seed
and
bedtime a-
gain a-

gainst a
garden
of slights

The dawn that
cherisher of
marbles
is

active

with
its duties: steel
coils, tricycle
tires,
natal kicks...

pur-
suing the
vision
to its logical ends...
 jus'!
 jus'!
and its sadness that figures it

Re-
pre-
hensible ineptitudes! spires
in synch! swallow
deeper deeper deeper
though I sink!

I
sink! a
round the
abstract orange

To The Gatekeeper

I am
green, and
red.

How
“I don’t give a shit, do
what you want, just
do it.”
of me!
It seems cool.

It seems
publishable.

Itemized, I’ve
little to
offer
though
and get on with it.

I mean
“whose vocabulary is
this, any-
way?”

It’s
ours and rare.

Abe Lincoln

Is it
gummy? the poem
is the same
 tyrannical
principle: juice
of the
outside of the
orange. Flagrant
drunk. Fulsome
in the
aptitude of excess, quiet
like
Abe Lincoln: quiet, and a
melancholy man.
This is
my
idea
of
democracy: whatever
idea is different
than this: the
extent of the
difference: that
is
democracy. He said

“that from these honored heads
we take increased heads
we take that increased devotion
that these dead”

under this nation
of god
and government

of the people of the government
shall not perishy
democracy!
et.c e.tc etc.

with gregory peck
as the narrator.

Spring

It's fare to be
young in
autumn's disturbance, the
wild pitch

of wrangling spring
bears, in-
tense in
their

consideration of
broken stems. Chimes
tear
earth, after

forgetting the
deeds.

*

Talents back
winds, salu-
tary, streaked
in nar-
ceine cold

variant of
bargaining's dim
saving. The
cruel

luck of it,
grants. Back
into far sides

of

discon-
tent, spared
of gone luxuries.

Poem

Little star
you lean like a Russian dancer
and your lisp is energetic
and you talk to strangers
and you confuse the housewives
and your horse is waiting in the yard
what is your name?

I came from afar myself
but have forgotten my direction
and grasp my abdomen
and sniff the nosegay on my lapel
and speak with an accent
and am divorced from my countrymen
and don't understand most books
and stayed after school most of the time I was in school
and don't like people in business suits
and have a first and last name
Sam Slade

when can we meet?

Joe Kafka

fingers his keychain
eyes the 666 building
fingers his keychain

has hairballs but is
a working class lout

damned if he's other and
damned if he's drinking
espresso coffee on Sundays

is Joe Amplitude
is Joe Aptitude
Joe Scaramungus

fingers the keychain
of the 666 building and
wishes it'd fall
into the Hudson River or

into his palm like
the poems of William Carlos Williams!

Joe Kafka is a Manhattanite
knowing it all but none of it
Joe Kafka is a Manhattanite

he knows
no girls