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7

joint straight

joint op

do you just
by means of
spent phrastics
then again
throughout and in
the day's cracked orders

to pleat - full to burst
with these ahead
uncertain buds
wounded in passim
by fracting delays
now down-pinned

they may mate
withering
to tell slightly

funnel sonic

surely that's a song in the funnel
sure enough funnel songs
ring throughout as predichtered
in the reflecting glass
wedged in the partition

sound mix

yes in my backyard
to theme park request stop
acceptable face of paintball
to allow treble at will

wherever any time
 does she words my mince
 to mime sound of play on light

precarious

watching wars dissolve
 re-coagulate
 take off
 spin away
 into their own delirium
 without end
 on one's mettle
 riding the hornèd gun

fail-well

that riveting sense of failure
 your always-target
 made no sense
 whatsoever
 for you succeeded
 at it
 beyond your
 wildest dreams

floating still

is it still afloat
 somewhere about us
 our little bateau ivre
 they holed it
 some years ago
 below the pimpsoul line

we've caulked and re-caulked
 baled and re-baled
 in the hope that

stealing the show

written in oblique italic
 thrown into reverse
 by a perverse breeze
 out of the near-west
 scudding clouds make off
 with whatever is
 left of good sense

one for the road

if it's your shout
 mine's a bread-on-the-rocks
 keep your voice down
 a'god's name
 or they'll all
 be wanting one
 for the unmarked path

unstoppable

we spin and turn endlessly
 though never on the spot
 stillness is just not our metier
 nor are we dervishes

free house

here's the living room
we call it open plan
sounds contradictory
but it's all we've got
that sky light opens onto
a flat roof where rice is nurtured
in humid rotations
mind that step
it leads to the hole-in-the-wall
you get stunning views
when conditions are perfectly aligned
sometimes I'll spend hours at a sitting
just looking drawing nothing but blanks
over here's the smallest room
it's occupied fully currently
by an expansion tank
left over from the war
excuse the mess please
we're in the middle of discussions right now
about how best to sweep away
poor mom's remains rest her soul
she thought the way to my heart
was via my innards
disgusted by saccharine
not one to stand on ceremony
I'd throw up at a helmet's drop
pudding's proof lies right before us
on your right is the lavabo
and yes I will wash at some stage
if the spring can be made to flow again
no we're not on mains
it was you wasn't it
who dripped blue candlewax
onto my chinos with a degree
of insouciance unseen since
Canute faced up to the tide somewhere west
of Knutsford at a guess
I won't forget that in a hurry

hard of hearing

did you say you'd spotted a panther
 behind the arras or harassed a panther
 with a spotted behind
 either way I may have got my lines crossed
 kissed the mews of your scene heard
 auricular fine tuning is not my strong suit
 I'm something of a losing cannon
 when it comes to spiral swearing
 though you'd never guess it
 from my struggle with aspirates
 like hhhmmmmnmmmmh for example
 at least according to Sybil
 she's invariably got her cheesy finger
 on things' pulses
 you should see the rings she wears
 all the better to lasso you with
 she says without a hint of hubristic irony as
 cross-legged on the decking above the weir
 we sit sipping squash and
 swapping notes on the relative merits
 of Thai-poo tea and manna from Devon
 don't press the panic button yet
 there's enough here for all and then some
 provided some of us are less greedy
 than indicated by our distended tummies
 she manages to sound like a cross
 between Rough Riderhood and
 a latter-day saint touting for votes
 on the eve of the final straw poll
 when the chips are eventually downed
 I guess she'll just slip silently away
 guiding her Moses coracle through
 the bull rush as if nothing had happened
 leaving me to sweep away the remains
 yet still no sign of that panther
 let alone his or her retched arrested spots
 I worry you know I worry
 so you should so you should my dear

drawing non-stop

distraught
 I draw districts
 subject to certain restrictions
 arising from the very materials
 making my districts just
 what they are
 you're a divagator
 you'll know the ways
 of receding
 becoming unknowable
 unparalleled
 yes squeezing has gone on
 somewhere down the line
 followed by expansion-contraction
 you can tell by the stretch marks
 striating the meadows
 yet by any strip of imagining
 these could never
 be called boundaries
 let alone
 the edge of things
 as they seem to stand
 and collapse simultaneously
 can't stop
 subject to district distraction
 summons received
 leg up that gantry
 if you please
 clearer view
 purer air
 pass me
 my working methods
 pack of notes
 wafer lamina of compressed
 whatman air
 and over there
 my subliminal mapping pen
 my eye-beam
 my shadow perhaps

and its double
 all I need
 what's left
 beyond all restraint
 of tirade
 but still
 strictly limited

aaah yes
 now I can see
 forever
 at last

Again

briefly

shorter than
 a swan's nose
 I tried to catch
 a glimpse of
 the ones upon
 a time

adrift on the sure line

yet again
 park-and-ride day at
 Listless Beach
 nine washed crabs shuttle
 back and then forth
 and then back to back again
 has no-one explained entropy to them
 anyway the sure line will have none of it
 it being uncertain of its bearings
 let alone its grounds
 though it is a word hard to pin down
 as words go
 unless the tide has ebbed

gone back on its word
okay it's neat and slim I grant you
a joy to hold
and be held
and yes need arising
it can be bent at whim
every which way
its fine upstanding appresentation
not with standing
don't be fooled though
by the dot and cross
maybe they were life sentenced to fixity
by the bigots of yesteryear
yet they're still angry as hell
each with a mind of its own
let them find it if they can
and find it they must
after all they've time
aplenty on their hands
neither rhyme nor reason
will stand in their way
if they are to swing
lively like
down history's broadacred
but shallow furrows
though tide and time have already
made off with the swag
our swag as it happens
look they haven't even left us
the price of a coke
let alone a cream of the month
the beach café proprietress
though it isn't so much a property
more the after-thought
of dwelling's impossibility
will surely go spare
she's relying on us to break
even this season
isn't that their hovercraft over there
quivering above the felt launch-pad
between the ocean and the rusting pier-stanchions
if we call

summon might be a better word
 the forehead police
 there might yet be time
 to put a stop to all this
 might there not
 I for one couldn't bear them
 to get away with it
 here I'll put it myself

live cycle

to me it was nothing out of the ordinary
 a common-or-garden night shift
 of a day-labourer simply fated
 to be in at soil's birth
 lucky you they said
 privileged even
 celebrated on that special eve
 by canapés on the terrace
 highballs at seven
 later neath a gibbous
 strolling players trod the boards
 reviving impromptu Orlando's infamous
 'Homilies of Sister Pledge'
 as an entr'acte
 they placed me front stage right
 while humus oozed steadily
 from my every pore
 under precise instructions from mein host
 derived from recent blind trials
 bakelite cups were strapped
 below my knees to good effect
 apprentice gardeners on furlough
 from our district's open prisons
 sprinkled dilutions of the good rich mix
 at twenty five to one
 across proximate parterres of perpetual spinach
 inaugurating our lost valley's
 brief age of fertility
 evacuated I was borne hovelwards

in the squire's o'er plush barouche
 thence to perform weekly
 down all my years
 throughout our growing seasons
 like all novelties
 my celebrity status dissolving steadily
 as my age-waning output
 delivers itself up as a final
 fine tilth legacy
 of self-scattering across
 my up-coming unmarked grave

parting gift

this is my last euphonium
 I bequeath it to you
 together with these
 madrigal biscuits
 here take them now
 as our last supper
 together this being
 the twilight of the models

vast potential

an eye is just
 a small mouth
 with a blockage
 an ear is just
 a nose that can
 no longer breathe
 a nostril is just
 an empty eye-socket
 staring straight down
 every hair on the head
 is just an undeveloped
 tooth waiting for its moment

stitch-up

art's in stitches
 just like the witches
 (nice one Satch)
 doubled up with laughter
 and pain
 its plight is to be
 pleated
 turned back onto
 into
 itself
 a joyfully troubled
 stitch-up

putting it behind us

expulsion from paradise
 didn't just happen
 that once
 as our very beginning
 it's our
 continuing fate
 we are doing it
 every and all day
 ensuring as our live-long
 performance our
 permanent absence
 becoming being nothing other
 than making the best and worst
 of endless self-expulsion

last resort

when nothing adds up
 it's time to take heart
 when the heart

can have
almost
its way

untimely

for the time being
life
being the only indestructible
runs through us
picks us up
dumps us
we're just not built
to keep up
with it in its
too fast too-slowness

going straight

yes
there can be
no margin
for error

if there is
no margin
for error
never strays
