

## Black Pastoral

Out of muddy earth text seeps like clabbered milk  
& seven women sleep in the ancient beehive  
that hangs from the vowels  
of the unspoken name...

(when I am summoned to the grassy altar  
to feel Sun/Moon  
fall thru the brain's salts, a spiral

power twists

modal music

into glandular signature,

forms the hills

of a distant body

as the pluvial text branches into secret grammars  
Charley Patton's  
guitar medicine tantra  
translates the order of constellations  
from deep time into local time  
& back again –

synaptic code, pine sap & vaginal fluid,  
mullein & nutmeg, simples gathered  
against the long night  
to come

in which broken brains scurry like mice across dusty barn lofts  
& sightless birds throw shadows into the scrivener's staircase  
& the moist breaths of the dead sigh in bones of fallen birch...

From the Blakean pain of earth's green groin,  
out of slow leaf-rot mouldering,

that landscape be language –  
a geomorphic syntax,

& each occasion of the breath, an earth,  
a birth, a black

pastoral unfolding  
in measures of telluric tension,

so that when I am summoned to enter  
the temple  
I enter

the order of my own skin  
& turn in the great carbon rings

of the original syllable – OM

**From the Deck of the *Pequod*, All is Wonder, All is Doom**

To begin is a matter of Thrones & Emanations.  
Where before had been the empty snow that makes  
a vast palace of God's Silence, now  
I crash thru bare walls. I sing,  
as the man said last night, for my supper  
& desire only the Black Stone.  
As far as the Other World goes  
I've got a map to find the way,  
carved in the bark of a tall Birch Tree.  
I crash thru winter. The Lake will soon  
be in Flower, the day empty itself  
of mystery to further gaze upon the Real –  
non-abstract specimen gathered  
in the Eastern Woods, refuge  
of Spirits & Powers, in the torn question  
without answer, in the silence of Marcel Duchamp,  
in the snarled mind fallen thru mossy Realms.  
If I crouch beneath the slain stars  
I return along a Vedic thread to where  
morning is a permission, Orenda,  
the great Medicine Wheel has turned  
within the fire's shape & cut  
a river's path in the brain of the Sky.

## Bai Ulgan, or The Drum's Path Thru the Sky

I dream the Old Ones circle my room all night –  
shaggy dance, weird  
perambulation – I drift out  
into the still-cold spring  
to do battle:

warring Spirit Worlds flow & churn  
in the waxing moon's  
watery salts. *From deep woods*

*a slow drum.* I wake  
against the forms: oak, apple, raccoon's  
red eyes aglitter  
where dark crawls slow up  
lumbering drumlins, sweeps across rank  
backyards  
seeped in vernal moisture.

The mind, adorned  
in seven ornaments of bone, gone  
into realms celestial, infernal,  
is pure animal,  
traverses the crashing  
black lake's shifting textures north,

traces the brawled rending wind  
back to its source in Algonkian syntax,  
cleanly, where tongue, lips, teeth  
shape  
the sounding powers –

Deer, Turtle, Fox...

Crow, Coyote, Rabbit...

Turkey Buzzard swoops in great loops

above tangled scrub-fields.      Mouths

find the language  
of rotting cabbage, speech of each

process-pared mineral & hexing herb:

scraps of chipped Pali script  
yoked to Pawnee star-map  
drawn on a flame-cracked scapula,

a lost poem of Ovid's in the Getic...

the drum's path thru the sky  
follows ancient lines by which  
the First Folk spread  
like a thousand tree roots  
thru the land whose sign  
is Eagle-With-Serpent-In-Its-Talons,

earthworks are raised  
in the brain's complex temple, Sun & Moon

are beaten copper disks  
that dangle from the dancer's belt

& finally the Geese return bringing

the Old Shamans

on their backs.

*PICABLA'S MACHINES*

are a hexing chord

that clatters in  
the sky's blood

charts empires  
in the dissonance

of a hieratic dread  
simple geometries

which recall nothing  
but crash thru mind

so that velocity alone  
erupts into

secret margins  
where the terrible

is joined  
with the numinous

*WHO DIVES DOWN BRINGS BACK A WORLD, WHO*

descends among sea's roots  
emerges with a single point  
from which space does  
declare itself –

rippling into axial  
possibility...

O local demiurge

down in the dark waters  
of the First Story  
where the Worlds reside,

immersed  
in Self's curved chord,

ringing the modal changes  
inward, outward, until

a little mud is retrieved

to smear on Turtle's back...