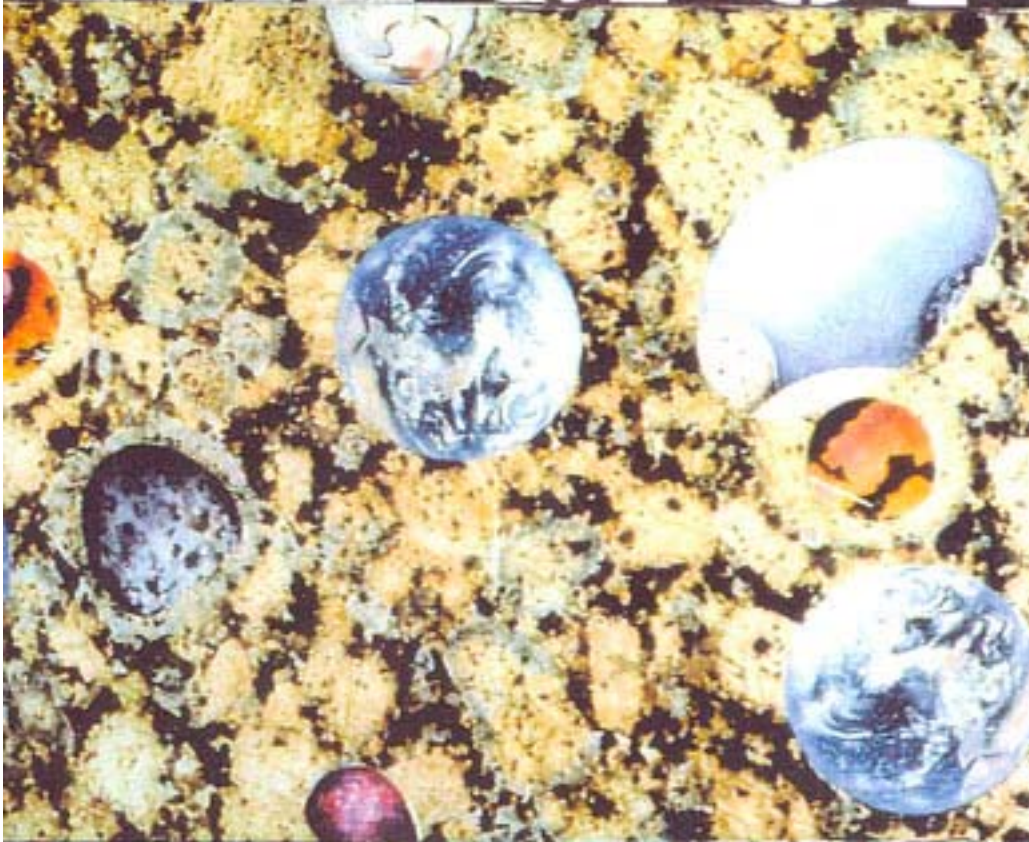


THE SPOT



RICHARD DENNER

THE SPOT

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COVER COLLAGE BY LUIS GARCIA

WHERE ON THE PAPER CHAIN ARE YOU?

Flaky footing on the high unit
wind cold, cold snow at 4000 feet a bitch
but it packs well around the pine plugs
above Indian Creek in the rocky outcroppings
not a forest, a farm, slash and burn, a war

We're riding in a crummy
an orange International van beat to shit
the bad karma tipi that takes us to work
we've named it *L.A.*
so we can drive to work in *L.A.*

I want my forest cut into chips
so my grandchildren can have toilet paper

On the other hand, we need air
and the mountains need cover
and the animals need homes
no matter if they're in rows

Breathe into the pain
or step out of the way

A MYSTERY

The inspector turns up
"stop, stop, don't throw
those rocks

down the slope, you're
hurting the trees"
fantasy of tying the inspector
to the hood of the van
as a trophy

Lost in a pause
where should I be on the unit?
I should be on the line
always a mystery

Outside the orbit of stars
lost and found inside
myself
creation arises and dissolves
in
a magical display

On to the next unit

MINARETS

Borne on a snow white goose,
Old Mother Muse
when she wants to wander
flies with wings.

Holding sand in my hand,
holding the world,
I feel sky space at ocean's edge
and watch my castle crumble.

My studio opens on a gravel yard
where prayer flags flutter.
A stray dog with a bell swings by

to drink from my offering bowls.

I'm trying to teach a jay to chant
without much success. He nods
inquisitively then continues
his way beyond training.

KEEP MOVING

I walk away
putting
one foot
and

then
the next feeling
bluer than
blue

I scope out
another place
another face

but my blood
remembers

the tree
by
the river

the cup
the flame

THRESHOLD

Everything is squeezed
into a single
point, the instant
the universe
appears

Things are already out
of hand
by the time
God creates
the world

Angels cruising
in a `98 Ford Escort
with automatic
weapons in their laps

I hear them peel out
at the corner of Hall
and Piezzi
before their Dunlops
dig in

Adam's bomb
life is sushi

yes, we have no
Nirvana

Spring's quick feet
bubble through customs

drunken calligraphy
powerful and strange

a circle of bees
is no place to be

the part
is whole

CALENDAR OF THE MOON

Moon of soft dreams
Moon of sweetness and smoke
Moon of wax and tar
Moon of scaffolds
Moon of the charnel grounds

Well-hung moon
Full-bosomed moon
Moon of a face I sometimes hate
Moon, Moon of a face I adore
Moon that turns to flame
Moon that turns in pain
Moon that goes as far as I go

Bandaged moon bruised and bloodied
Tangletooth moon with a mouth of cotton
Babylonian moon hiding in a cloud rack
Old man moon sitting in a chair

Moon covered with lost socks
Moon with astronauts in her mustache
Moon cruising in her black Mercury convertible
Moon dancing in a diaphanous gown
Moon peeping in at me through my window

Cryptic moon
Perfumed moon
Drunken moon

Moon of the raven who sat on the flagpole

when a bolt of lightning struck
Moon of the humpies jumping in the stream while
I'm doing the venison jerk to the stoverag band

Moon on a hill in a tree in the heart
Moon in a place I've made
Moon just beyond my hand
Moon, will you be free after work?
But, no, you have to work a double shift

FREIGHT

Milwalkee
Milwalkee
Milwalkee
Milwalkee
Cotton Belt
Cushion Ride
For Fragile Freight
Great Northern
Great Northern
Milwalkee
Milwalkee
Milwalkee
Milwalkee
Milwalkee
CottonBelt
Auto Pak
Cotton Belt
Auto Pak
Cotton Belt
Auto Pak
Milwalkee
Milwalkee
Milwalkee

NO O ZONE

deadly rays
not easy to kiss these off

bodies piled in heaps
arguing over the sky
howls coming from shrouds
totally dismal
the darker it gets
something serious
seriously out of control
maximum out of control
a landscape of refrigerators
wrecked cars and black feathers

tempting to say
"to hell with it, I'll
eat while there is food
drink while there is drink
love while my flesh is still fresh"

TIME SPEED LANGUAGE

for Claude

so intricate, so amazing
the wet leaves on the sidewalk
where am I going?
I think I'll go a little further

I take a sheaf of clouds
from the top shelf
and a burst of sunlight
from the pine trees

I run around looking
for the croak of a frog
and find it in the center
of the earth

without sleep for a week
standing on a corner
watching the light change
a man walking/a hand/a man

a mysterious thing
a man
speaking from inside a tree, a rock

here I look at the sea
hear the waves
break upon the shore
and in my heart

a woman sails by on springs
and a man pulled along by a dog
a snake sluggish on the concrete
a leaf ashamed of falling

time speed language
the stones plead with the stars
and are rained away
while we watch
the children's costumes
burn

I take a bath and wash my hair
I lay out my dress shoes
my new tie and a clean shirt
I'm so happy we're going

going going way beyond

going on the way
on the way to God
through love

PLANTING THE BLAST

On the moonscape
of Mount Saint Helens
I've learned a new technique
called the *pumice pump*

Place the tree roots on the ash
place the hoe on the roots
and push the roots straight down

Speed planting the last ash unit
trying to get the trees in straight
overplanting every plot
and praying the roots
find something to live on

Some trees I named for Bongnan
some for Lulu
some for the protectors
of this silicon mountain

Putting the right tree in the right hole
while picking rocks out of my nose
made of snot and volcanic ash

JUST AS IT IS

I watch
with mystic

horror the sun
darken and
shimmer
through violet
haze

dream green
nights
and watch
distances shatter
into foam
while feeling

slow kisses in
the midst of
calm

BEING JUST AS WE ARE

we shall be one
even when the hollow faces
on time's screen stare leaning forward
across the distance between here and there

in morning calm
we sit at a red art deco glass table
drinking espresso, Bongnan and I
along our own 38th Parallel

a story about a water tower
falling on your head and being trapped
in the dark and mud for hours
and you laughed, Bongnan
at the ghosts eating on festival days
telling your mother
the chopsticks didn't move

after you left, I sat where you sat
with my arms around my knees
trying to feel your presence
sitting in your place

SECRET SPOTS

My way
is a maze in a haze
a cold front where
I await an image
mist or rock
then the teapot whistles
"Pick me up"

Outrageous hair
and a pretty face
behind the not so pretty
abstract countenance
saying "Touch my ice
with warm tongs
be tender and talkative"

Words from your yoni
we go at it
now now now now
my tongue in you
a kiss
an orgasmic earthquake
my skull xplodes

ON TO THE NEXT UNIT

Tree planting on Mount Baker
this contract is 180 acres
long with diamond shapes
known as *Dragon Tail*

I fly high, I fly low
at Concrete Sauk Valley Road
one mile to orange bridge
turn left follow river
to Finney Cumberland Road
turn right single lane with turnouts
6 miles tall tree on left
with winding road sign
8 miles bridge with guard rails
9 miles small clearcut with twisted culverts
10 miles waterfall on right
mile 11 turn right up hill at white stop sign

When I arrive, I'm no longer lost
what I've lost I find everywhere

WE LOVE EACH OTHER

you just coming
out of a drunk
frightful bitch
in a dark funk

you see me
as amigos

see yourself
as we

see us

as them

I'm deaf, but I hear you

PASTA IS FASTA ORDERED BY PHONE

for Jane

tucked away in the Missouri hills
you have heated up this morning's coffee
and dumped sugar in it
put on pink bright lipstick

air crisp like a diamond
the edges of the leaves showing
you leaf through glue-rumpled pages
of *Art News* and *Vanity Fair*

cutting out favorite images
(after removing the perfume inserts)
slicing and dripping and copying
bits of poetry in and around

SPIT IN THE OCEAN

58 this Sunday, how did I get to be 58?
taking mom to IHOP for potato pancakes
seeing a sign advertising one free meal
with the order of two for senior citizens
I'm unable to take advantage of the savings
frustrated insecure low self esteem low
grade depression impotency introversion
freaked out flipped out and flustered

a lot of this going around

maybe I need mistletoe injections maybe
I need Viagra maybe I need more yang
in my diet do a few pushups along with
the qigong and a class at the JC relax
quit worrying about what LIFE means enjoy
my millennial anxieties and Y2K paranoia
nothing serious here just a momentary
meltdown

I sit here with a tuna sandwich
ensconced in country club suburbia
slicing and dripping and copying
bits of your letter into this poem

Long live our brilliance!

NEW FORMS

Where do I go from here?
A new will is born
with the flowering of Spring

A place smaller than the heart
but bigger than the world

THINGS KEPT WITHIN MYSELF

back
to the thing itself

an exact schedule
soon the moon

scissors gesture

behind the curtain

string theory
drops from a tree

moisture, money
space

infinity is a turtle
on a slow track

solid void
a cosmic hit

really a struggle
to clean up this mess

a touch of ice
a chunk of winter

sparkling
shark at a harp

heart shaped
lollipop of love

arrogant emotions
sentimental beliefs

an otter
on my totem

exposed, cold
drooling

a wide hole
a verticle wall

vastness upon vastness
light and space

busy day
sitting around