



Constructive Rest

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Collage by the author

ANGELS

angels riding turtles
angels flying kites
angels necking in the park

the lady at the county office
accepts my application
although my registration is invalid

the UPS man's clipboard buzzes
says he has a problem meditating
boxes backed up Pagosa to Omega

angels riding turtles
angels flying kites
angels necking in the park

DUET AT SUNSET

for Heidi

I heard a mother sing
I hold a Symphony that brings
Me peace and gives me faith
A dream of many colors

The wind stirs up and hollers
Superstition!
Feel free to go a new direction
Here's a chilly kiss for comfort

The mother retorts
Be still, heart
My songs are nightmares and prayers
Painted with the hues of Windy Bay

QUE PETITE SIRAH, SIRAH

for Mike Dunne

I hear what the guests say
Big, dense, robust and rambling
Where is his modesty?
He shoulders the food aside
He's got too much muscle for the table
Too full of himself to sit with us

But who knows my real name?
Or what's behind my ripe berry smile
Go on about my tell-tale peppery spiciness
Say what you will about my grinding tannins
I may not be supple on the dance floor
But I'll leave the party with a royal flush
While all the zinfandels rush for power

CONSTRUCTIVE REST

for Pamela

This is magic.
It's the technology
that's real.

The burned, twisted bodies
are real. The beauty
is monstrous.

No, you can't blow it up
even if it is the damned home
of the atom bomb.

Your feeling is a path
and when the path splits
sit until the mountain crumbles.

Stay strong.
Stay strong for the child of the world.

A HILL CALLED BRINGER OF LUCK

starting with day A and proceeding to F and backing
back to B realizing F leads to U if you mean to get to C a
Chinese box where you let me into a room with a door I
can go through but you can't and I let you into a room
with a door you can pass through but I can't

starting with pieces the book Pieces and your face the
typeface I said I didn't like it the boldness but your face

was receptive and I liked it especially the freckles on
your nose E dim of ME freken from ON freknur you
perusing poetry and I assuming the role of the dark Host
of the Ethereal and it was slow and easy standing there
imagining a secret place at another time I get out of a car
I get off a horse down the street from the Silver Dollar
we enter a Quonset hut with a false front

you touched the omphallus of my heart and the current
was sufficient to set the wheels pinging a new beginning
merely by placing your hand on that slim volume the
waters rushing apart and we begin to step out on real
ground

I feel like I have the hands of a chimp signing to the
barman for two beers finding seats by the ribs of the
beast I take off to take a whiz wondering if I should
leave you alone but noting the flag pinned to the curtain
and the dark faces I know we are on native soil

the head is full of patrons pissing away the night four
dudes at the bowl and one peeing the length of the
trough three guys in front of me putting theirs under his
arc and I try not to get hit thinking what a shot of the
pool cue to find this corner pocket I observe there is no
subject there is no object so I zip up to an accordion and
guitars

I get out of a car I get off a horse on Umptanum Ridge
and smoke while you change your shoes I wear galoshes
lore on how to live in the woods and I step into the creek
and feel the firmness and rhythm of your grip

you are a stranger in the twilight apprehensive I might
strangle you with barbed wire in a hollow by a snag
while I'm nagging myself for not bringing a compass
since I'm into true north and I want to tell you about the
Big Dipper how the Indian see a great bear looking for a
place to lie down and the French see a casserole and the
Egyptians a hippopotamus with a crocodile on its back
asterisks the casserole the possible exception expressing
ancient and astonishing wisdom

we have to re-evaluate the past but that seems like a lot
to lay on you our first date so I talk about the contours of
the land and you about the bouquet of bullet holes in an
enameled stove and your childhood in Illinois the girls of
Fairberry wanting to be on their own going to
Bloomington to work at State Farm my grandparents
lived nearby in Chenoa and the summer nights full of
fireflies whose tails we pinched to make engagement
rings and wearing sheets in abandoned farm house rooms
like Klu Klux Klan and when the gypsies camp by the
river and set up a sideshow my uncle makes them
vamoose and my destiny goes with the fortune teller

the Queen broods on her Byzantine chalice like me she's
dreamy like you she's sympathetic to the man of
dejected aspect deserting the cups of his felicity and all
that I possess house and archives is riot reflected in the
Chariot reversed

our treasures and our hearts are there when we begin a
short hike that gets shorter and shorter as we climb scree
it is wise of me to show you sage by rubbing the leaves
in my palms no matter the waterfall is out of reach

hunters shoot at the cliffs kids roll rubble from a cave the
site of the archeological dig is a mystery nature at her
best is a blast of sage

I get out of a car I get off a horse and walk beside you a
woman a man talking about rock we stop by a standing
stone describing the basalt formation in antediluvian
times but it leaves out how each star of the Big Dipper of
each constellation has several kinds of influence each
star has a form in the landscape

driving along riding along everything shimmering the
branches in the field vine maple? elderberry? wild rose
sage rose rose of the desert a red shimmering along the
road I saw it and you were happy I saw it too even if I
didn't know what it was