

Cutting for Sign

1

A hare yourself, you hunt your own prey.

Latin Proverb

Cutting for sign

tracking

marks, lines, leavings

as they meander

fall

catapult

from mountain springs

to estuary

leading

one would think

or hope

to what made, what makes, them

deep in the softer ground

faint in the sand

hardly a trace

in no time at all

across the harder parts

the denser substances

figured to have passed here

by points of light excited

fireflies

over a meadow

in the optic nerve

in the field of matter

finding virtue in

transcription
exact description
accurate minutes

of minute particulars

heel and toe
soles firm

apparent changes in direction

clear accounts

of inexplicable
unduplicable

leaps

set down as
points of departure
juxtaposed to
re-entry points

release and reconnection
past and present conjoined

with some measure of
the distance between the two

honest books
telling it like

2

those mirrors me deceived
Guillaume de Lorris

How was it then?

the high hoops of evidence
the low excrementations
in periodical deposits

the object of attention
somewhere along the line
aware of being subject

matter
and so
kicking
into

elusive mode:

circling back

toe to heel
soles pivoting

a shuffling motion
indicating a look
over the shoulder

stepping into prints
already there

turning loup-de-loups
like something out of Ovid
or Grimm

taking to the water
slipping behind the mirror

coming up from below
flexive bodies
breaking the surface

scattering the light
dancing on it

3

hunting the meaning . . . the meeting
David Abram

nothing, presumably, at random:
some purpose; intent; willfulness

on the part of seen
and seer alike

tracker and tracked

tracking each other

O Thou looking a lot like me

who do you think you're fooling?
How close do you really suppose
you can get

keeping
an ear out

following
your nose?

Can the long-sought be caught
by seeking? the looked for, by looking?

Instead of tracking
might not calling

from a blind or something

or feeling the silent
subtle body

at the back of the head

do the trick
better

or is it not true
that what you're after
is already
after you?

4

and makes (not knowing) that which he pursues
Coleridge

In either case, maybe all you
can do is what you've always done
and try to be ready when it comes.

But more than likely, friend, after all,
aren't we talking wild geese here:

where they go; the letters they make overhead
out there beyond the undulating V

characters from a language lost,
ecce signum, life sentences
sealed, stamped and delivered

invisible as the sounds out of them
to those curled into positions
babes before they're in arms assume,
unable to put the mouth where it wants