

Possibility Witch

This convexed love a rearview mirror
fixed on negative space

subjects closer than they are
stars turned inside out

fish heads on the half shell
blind luck in the southcoast sun

roller coaster skeleton
a carnival of old thrills

funhouse a vacant lot
where the midway was

pulled over for of all things
going too slow on the freeway

mission viejo doves and swallows
last stop before the border

a soft lens on the pupil's black hole
a no services rest stop

quantum entanglement
right around the next bend

*

Offwhite stucco ceiling writhing
in Celtic puzzles and Chinese knots
philodendron fingers inching
across a bonewhite wall

You someone else entirely
yet somehow someone I'd known
as in the mirror I wasn't.
Bach made it all reasonable

*

Yet Further
north of language
schools and Bolinas

a busload of heads
in profile
at tinted windows

odd hours
cuckoo clock
times of departure

gift of gab
behind the wheel
navigating

picturesque
place names
picaresque lives

washed up
between between
and nowhere

in the beginning
desire not instinct
but drive she said

*

Next stop
Here Now
On or Off

*

Beef-to-heel to Connemara curls
cloverleafs all over the map

whistling swans and Uileann pipes
air translucent wavering

where all roads lead to *amor inanis*
calling on those in the land of the dead

*

The moon milk blue so thin
the sky behind it came through

*

Your innocence beguiled me
like when you said the grass doesn't mind
being stepped on because that's its thing
or like that night you lay down
face to face on that six-eight
smackhead rapist just out of San Quentin
high on the floor, no doubts at all
your good vibes would keep you safe
while helping some to heal him

*

I'm burning a hole in the seat of this chair
you said, looking across the table.
No smile, simply a statement of fact.
Morning coffee in a little café

a city unknown to either of us
come in on different flights last night

to advocate for a common cause
no hint before that of anything more.

At your hotel room door
after I'd taken the bait This once
you said and never to be mentioned again
which I hadn't until now.

Naked on the white sheets you lay quiet,
no move or sound, no fire I could find
to quench, only a smoldering
in your dark Celtiberian eyes

*

In your more sentimental moods
you liked to visit that old graveyard
too high on the bluff to hear
waves slapping the rocks below,
gravestones too weathered to read and one
with a hole through the granite and on either side
windowglass circles so you can see her heart
once loved and loving now shriveled and black

*

No, no, I take it all back,
that couldn't have been you with the bronze sickle
prowling the Navarro redwoods

or light as a feather in the Berkeley Hills
Tenderloin Mission Dolores
Land's End group grope

eyes aflame when that restaurant
in Big Sur refused serve
you and your ragtag family

or skirting miles of sheer death-wish
at the edge of the old haul road
high above the lost coast

smooth as a sylph between William Tells
with crossbows on electric wine
and friends with beercans on their heads

or gamboling with lambs on the Scotia headlands
sapphire eyes too ancient to bear
looking into for fear of drowning

dancing solo in a beachtown bar
pretending to see only one eye
pinned on your every move

or grocerycart bag lady
ensorcelling Kwikstop gas pumps

with blue streak logorrhea

hand in hand walking the dunes
dark night winter squall
tracks dissolving in wet sand

or under the space needle umbrella
more than enough show and tell
masochism to go around

and north of all that a shingle beach
below the old-growth, July,
sky severe clear, the pulsing

cobble and wave call and response,
pterodactylan pelicans
single file skimming the surface

*

Mountaintop islands in a sea of cloud
vermillion memories of the sun
the air all but palpable
your voice the breath I breathe

*

The best ever you said was on his Harley,
head down behind the windshield, the hog's
signature *suck-squeeze-bang-and-blow*
between your thighs the two of you
leaning into the hairpin curves coming
down the long grade from the high country

*

I-10 Shamrock Texas
bitter cold blizzard night
hiking back east to try to make peace
between my mother and grandmother
while there was still time.

A white El Dorado pulled up
under the truckstop arc lamps.
When I opened the door you motioned me
to put my pack in the back seat
and sit up front in the heater's warmth.

In the blue glow of the dash and headlights
reflected back in off the snow,
the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen:
high cheekbones, long hair, turquoise,
your very presence a radiance.

Hours and very few words later
under a truckstop arc lamp
outside OK City

with a smile you wished me luck.
I watched your lights disappear in the snow

*

You came in wearing a mask
the color of invisible

so where your eyes should have been
all I saw was the open door behind you

so when your voice without a mouth
said Am I too late?

I answered Are you out of your mind?
then asked myself the same question

*

Contact lens in too long:
eyeballs bloodshot
white matter in the tear ducts
— *as long as it's not green pus* said the eye-doc
*but give it a rest, don't set your beams
too high, quit trying to tell what you see
with only one eye on the road
from what you're looking at or for*

*

High on a windmill platform
surrounded by a steel skeleton
blades overhead mincing the moonlight
the wellpipe at the center between us
the air cooled down by propriety

*

Between the two Quakers say
is where love is.
Between *yin* and *yang* is *ch'i*
says the *I Ching*

*

Midnight the middle of nowhere
high desert backcountry blacktop
still wet from late afternoon showers,
down the road ahead a myriad
of red lights dancing in the darkness
(*For sure nothing human* you said)
that when we stopped turned out to be
thousands of newborn spiders clinging
to wisps of silken shroud lines
suspended from the darkness above,
their spectral red lunatic eyes
refracted by our headlights,
yet another generation
drifting west in the humid air

*

And there were deer in the old orchard
does and fawns and they came to you

and you gave them windfall apples,
lightly touched their foreheads

and they nuzzled your palm then we
walked back to the car without a word

*

Oedipus you may have noticed
has precious little to do with this
despite your proclivities
my sibling fantasies

the Sphinx even less, though
riddle-me-this love poems
with a vengeance do pose questions that forever
plague family romance

*

Walked away
from another one
said the brakeman