



Excerpts from: Odes to the Secret Canons

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5: Fire of Fire

There is nobody from where I am going
(or time has gone, not like a river but like ash spit up
time has burned away since anyone last came from where I go)
I lit no torch to navigate that land of ashes;
I sought no keys to open up the desolated quadrants even dust spat out
that had swallowed up roads,
 (not as a scar might itch away)
 even as a stomach digests itself, in time
 even as blood fills arteries with its' own cement:
 even as the wasteland closes roads to pollinated corrosions
I made no map to differentiate: stumps of markers
 pools of poisoned rain
I did not conspire with the wasteland to open up the opportunity of shattering
any means ahead:
I bear what has passed to fragmentation,
 what cannot be patched to its' lost end
 from what might be swept up, mingled in mud
 patched to what handle or nose we have:
I bear what has snapped off to remainder in my mouth like a bone:
thereby I made no map to smooth off raw edges putty prosthetically flakes from:

and I cannot advance but that my last known mark is snapped
 like desiccated trees behind me
and I cannot begin my work where any tool I held is whole
I cannot begin until I must melt most exacting ores from shattered stones,
uncertain if the marrow of what solidity I burn away

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to flat conveyance
 I knew that I could breath;
 that I could shrink into the hard of me
 and did and thereby undid.

* * *

21: Introadversion

Our very fingers were the poking-forth of some abstract solidified:
 the splinters and cracks they bore
 like the resins baked upon those, our poking fingers
 like parcels duly to confer
 (upon touching bona fides hiding
 like covert Braille
 in older scars
 (and by circumcision of any upstart regrowth)
 embedded)
 these deep-in protrusions less foreign to us than our fingers,
 poking up from hands that had
 circumspectly finely finally
 so-dryly washed themselves:
 every breach in our digital skin was distance reclaimed
 every item, be it mineral
 no blood had ever drank
 no breath yet expanded in
 be it some fragment
 that had died off some other life
 that poked into us was distinctions-between reclaimed
 as if our fingers too, might be shown to be some deviance
 some poking-out accomplished through us, protesting:
 not so offending in that protested violation than that we must reclaim
 what we had lately used of ourselves
 to touch again just that which, all that which, was shoving off from us
 that which was pushed to sinking faster
 by our frantic pilgrimage of last contact
 our last contact upon what was more to us
 than these foreign fingers that bear our last report to us
 up our long and alien arms.

* * *

22: Viafract

I planted my door at the top of my foundation;
 a buried fixity foots a waiting vacancy:
 my every house must be founded upon the pathways pulled distantly to it
 my every house must mend some fissure in the roads' continuity;
 this is what I have demanded of my vagabond body

this is what my breath seeks where my skull is a moist dark curve
 this is what my vagabond body demands of my breath-of-ghost that stretches it
 this is what my vagabond bones demand of their secret erosion by blood and breath
 this is what my skin demands of the fact of my secret occupation
 this is what my lips demand of eyelids and brow that display the teeth's bitten secrets
 this is the door that holds my foundation below it square and still and covertly spread
 this is the cementing of a solid face from reconnoitered ways beneath, manifold gliffs
 this is why every house of me must match the eaten marrow
 of my bones' own deepest occupant
 this is why every skin and bone and face of me must bear my doors' founded vacancy:
 this is why my doorway must pull stretching land from other origins than my own
 this is why my skin is stretched by the fact of a distance it ends to mend me
 this is why my doorway must patch the roads it breaks to be.

* * *

24: Recidividermalist

I hide my best claims to land in towns that my skin reweaves
 like a coded diagnosis
 whereby each scar records the composition of the violating agent
 whereby each fresh skin weaves accountancy of what rude minerals I drank to weave it

 whereby blood flows in fugitive account of my own hard escape from a wet broad world
 whereby breath escapes filled with what I could not dryly plunder to my bones
 whereby my totality of skin does not emancipate or rejoin me
 whereby what dropped off from me some river or wind or clay took in
 whereby the light of day itself is pilfered to my own inner fire and I return thin heat
 what I claim of hard of bones and flex of skin casts ancient craft against primeval rupture
 my hidden claims upon the lots of towns casts the fact of skin upon the need of bricks
 what I bear in my driest hollows I powdered down from sand and clay and sky and air
 for the teeth of first minerals to break our dust
 and drink our moisture down
 into dry old iron
 for what I bear of my fleet breath and secret blood
 teaches each new strange town my craft of skin.

* * *

25: Atlas

Nothing turns but that it spirals in
 To that fixity that roots each mainspring to fist-cherished force
 Or: to that land of snapped stems no alloy can mend
 Or: to that density that sucks in anything that might reflect upon it
 Or: to that fundamental rust where no exposure can be afforded
 nor any accreted surface competent to the lack
 Or: to that covert pivot where no swivel of license has found the ecstasy of vector:
 Nothing bears an axis save that every cycle craves a central fixity

37: Catagyre

Thus we turn and we turn,
 casting sight at every gap or open flat
 that best displays where our seeing must curve away:
 and thus we turn

 and turn
 and thus we say that
 this is why
 we are thus circumstrict around:

Thus we filter down into the drains we named a marketplace
 thus we trample down the earth we packed upon the most fermented waters
 thus we seek to slake the heat we gather with us
 the heat we make to sink
 even as the bundle of our breathing sinks:
 thus we named these places the hard plateau that seats our concourse:

Thus we hold this in faith, that in the center of all is found a map of all around it
 and we hold this to be condign truth: that every map can enter its' topic
 that every map can face its orient
 that more than scale makes a map of worth at the center of the place denoted:
 the territory spread upon the map within the belly of the turf
 thus we hold in faith that where there is an axis a map is cast as its' shadow
 that where there is no axis a map may yet be centered therein:

Thus we may cast an oracle of the ash our hearth must leave
 of the smoke our chimneys lose
 of the very dust that clots our latest rains:
 thus we hold in faith that the smoke of other lands we drink entitle us
 thus we hold that the abandonment of our own best soil
 down the thickening stream
 advances us

Thus we hold this in faith:
 if each axis fails of itself to pierce the center,
 if each axis in itself pulls upon the orient of every other axis
 if each axis is snapped by the counter-twist
 of foundation
 upon constituent fiber
 if no axis indicates any center of things in the artifact of its' intended vector
 yet where the axis of axes must have rested
 in mere intent
 there is a map of all around it

Thus the sun sets upon the marble,
 illuminating cracks the Noon mistakes for gleam
 thus the wind rattles the axis,
 thus the night conveys the snapping of the axis
 thus the pipes
 and the echo caught bouncing on the stream
 and the oracular voice hidden in the wells

upspeak

the echo of the rumble of the tremble of the axis throughout the marketplace:

Thus there is a voice that did not emerge from common mouths

thus there is a voice that even the open throat

of the wandering wizard

does not breathe

thus even in the lips of marble is the contrivance of the tools outspat

by another tongue

thus is the joint of the axis

ground by another set of thumbs

Thus is the slather of matter over the uplifted glyphs resifted

thus are the glyphs sundered from the highest stones

thus does the axis rock in sympathy with the resundering of the oldest glyphs

Thus do we grind the glyphs anew

to the slant the axis had

when we entered the morning market:

Thus do we grind the glyphs anew

to the rounding that broke of the prior angles

to the new corners carved where old grounding snapped down

to the dust

our feet better know:

Thus the innovative obedience of new chisels to meet the ancient weave of bone

thus the opening in the marketplace

for the wandering wizard bearing bursting vines and tangled hair

thus the preparation of waiting fresh marble for the staid recharting of the ground:

thus we take in faith as we take in air new dust demands a portion in:

thus the function of the screws complicit in the jamb

thus the function of the lock that nestles the key

thus the function of the hinge

thus the function of the bending knee

thus the function of confession

thus the function of catharsis

thus the function of opening-in

thus the function of the flow

thus the flowing of the functions

thus the flowing of the functions

thus the flowing of the functions

hence the occupation of the offices

hence the terminal vacancy and primordial emptiness of every office

hence the function of the gap

hence the function of the void

hence the function of the flickering and the function of the candle

hence and thus the execution of the functions

Thus we may cast an oracle of the ash our hearth must leave

illuminating cracks the Noon mistakes for gleam

thereby to keep the secret that unbinds

flowing in only where and when the ore is gone

those stiff tethers from our axis
that were in founding times clean
outward
flowing
from where the axis pierced the surest ground
more surely;

We seek a craft of knots

whereby we tug an end to an infinite tension
wherein all surface stretches to
destroy the weave of all
magnetic hegemony
all polar excision
of woven delineation
the inward twists to all it does not
include to it
wherein all navels reopen
as flat universal skin

whereby we tug with an afterthought and all returning exits
and all return is granted
and regains
and regains again

to keep our axioms of the folding up of all boxes
of construct aligned conligaments
we seek a craft of woven opening sealing

Whereby we seek a craft of sharp recall
(in the time when our thumb had feately silenced our songs and the ululation of reckoned laws and in
the time when our tongue had twisted our thumb to the twisting out of songs it had stolen as the
only craft it yet could bend up from any matter minded)

whereby to test the knots
for the evidence
of secret severance

whereby to test the knives to learn their known ore of origin

to learn if they shatter the same buried place that gave them up
to learn if they are bound by secret magnetism
to the axis they express;

whereby to learn if the twist from the axis that turns the inward outward in

has lost the means of inner ordination
has lost the means of boundary
has lost the twist that pulls the outland in;

Whereby we seek a canon of exact estates
(with our resolve to recall

our latest revisions
to our latest correction

of primary canons)

and a heritage of sound hypothesis in our song

we seek to design a glyph of certificate craft

that must rub to the top of every better ore

we seek thereby a means to adjust our faces to last seasons' festival masks

to adjust our official marble to the current decree of our fleetest coins
 we seek thereby to adjust our finer bones

to these stronger inner streams
 of other things

we seek by open decree of a guilded test

a secret means of exacting notice
 upon the seems
 and ligatures

we can commonly re-negotiate
 according to the time inherent

in drying lime and setting tar
 a common means of secreting first and final items
 whereby they take the longest route
 back up to all eroded surfaces;

wherefore we seek a craft twisting up first and final fibers from the needs' undoing;

Whereby we seek

a craft
 of clocks and candles

ignited in a perfect moment,

(with the secret strategy whereby our axis first aligned the horizon by which its' ground was
 chartered and extended now spoken forth from our most jaunty market chatter down to where our
 breath dropped from words but could not drop to or warp to the empty of)

mistook the trapping of the day between our teeth for our best or only last tomorrow.

whereby we kindle the fear of prior hours

we piled
 to arrive at a more auspicious time
 to more featly fall
 from our combustive heritage
 of official clutter;

We seek a craft of knots, of lineage,

of liberty
 of lease and release
 of law and light

Thus do we seek to return to the rote pull of our winding axis

upon our oldest lines of estate,

to the tug of our recent scar of new boundary

upon the scar wherein
 our secret center lies buried

Thus do we seek a return of our choral thrum to an axis we know the wobble of.

* * *

41: Anapalingyric

To Walt Whitman, here and there, to Mar Thomas, who greets upon arrival, to Magister Abathur,
 who traversed, and to William Behun, who maintains the waysigns

I never returned from where the furthest fringes unraveled at my passing
 like fingers divorced

thereby is the turning of my function;
 call back to me)
 (thereby did bones sing
 from mended
 cracks for me;
 thereby did the rending of axial roots
 the shattering walls
 speak new words
 I coughed back up from dust)

I never departed but that I already bore in skin

the cracks that spoke
 between
 and over us
 (and from every crack pours out the tar

and in every patch of long-kept sameness
 in every where each skin seems whole

the tar pours in);

I never traveled but that I walked an ancient fracture

that bore empty equal to any space save that it lacked the possibility of swivel
 save that it was bore no opening out
 save that it bore every opening in

(whereby tar pours into every joint of change

every twist whereby each center

of each bone

in health becomes a perfect fulcrum);

I never travelled but that many separations

the perfection of my skin as a single seam
 the lost smooth of oldest hooks in older names
 the prosthesis of repair

upon all the turning
 of the world
 must break;

the amputation of horizon from our charters
 had sealed away all I walked among

I never travelled but that crossing bore no loss

I never travelled but for the search I could not make where I knew each name and home;

I never settled but that I had borne a smooth underfoot when I was long agone

I never presumed return but that I had heard all I knew snap shut

with the audibility of teeth
 tight as newer skin
 over the gap of me;

where there had been a parting behind me had grown a seam
 where a seam had grown another voice ingested

like some angled twin of ready ways,

sore of splitting:

yet also like ground lay broadly down to be walked upon by me:

and by me insofar as the new voice my absence opened

still sang out to me:

thereby was my way across the tar that flows back into all that meets

the fractured knowledge of fingertips

(for all that we break is the skin of the tar

for all that we break down in our teeth
 for all that our feet chew most commonly upon the marketfloor
 for all that we chop to finest commonality to thicken our songs to a samer tone
 for all that we smash down into the fewer words we keep between us
 for all that we break down to commonality we commonly walk is the bones of the tar
 and all drops down into the tar our own feet grind out from what drops from us and each
 and every foot pulls up with dilated strain from where each pull up
 from where all is pressed back down together in stuck dark commonality
 to thick and liquid joiner
 wherein song and law
 and skin and seed
 and center and every scar stretched out alike are ground
 between strained and sinking feet and the way we cut between us
 between the ground we set aside to raise our heights and walls
 the ground we reamed down in for ores and hideyholes and official crypts
 from which belch forth new words

into the gap of old laws
 not now allowed
 a naming

and all these rest upon the secret tar each wall and each turn soaks up
 where old bending inwardly locks
 where old closure now yawns to secret fissure

the tar conceals
 in prosthetic
 thickening-in)

From the only mouth I ever opened without parting
 I spoke the only voice of me that was ever new:
 thereby I claim to lay a web by each straightest path I managed
 where the land was broken;

each way forward woven into the shattering of bedrock beneath;

Thereby I received in me the subtle tar that spills in secret over everything;
 I drank down in

what thickens the road
 which bends the skin
 which turns the joints
 which chews the oldest names in raw angry teeth
 whereby the hum of song sinks too thick to speak for law
 which turns the thumb from the sense of joint
 which turns the tongue from rivaling cleverest fingers

thereby in my opening I drained away the secret weight
 that drags down all that moves,
 that levels all that stands

unstuck the

rising of resurrected breath
 the singing out of laws
 the escape of axis from the rooting-in
 of skin from the core from the skin
 of horizon from the brief reweaving
 of the raveling frontiers;

from the elastic connection of each to each
 whereby the roads are turned to need

