

SOMETHING OTHER
THAN OTHER

PHILIP ROWLAND

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for Haruka Sophie

III

Bio Notes

puddled night pavement –
the shape my past
refuses to take

*

the unmeant
bent
into life

*

someone masquerading as someone

*

still evening –
at home
in a foreign land
going out of my way
to step in old snow

*

the taste of match
in the first drag –
family revisited

*

leaf I leave
on the floor of
my childhood

*

death
like a foot
tapping the ceiling

*

b. for born d.
for died and

parenthetically
at that

*

morning haze
a student asks what will happen
to my bones

*

measured for a burial:
the distance from
self to word

*

He was trying (they may say)
to say something, but was
too busy chewing on something
mistaken for nothingness.

Photos of Poets

poet so sunk in thought it seems doubtful he'll speak again
poet who has clearly done his thinking and attained an

 unassuming serenity

poet with wife and artist-collaborator in bed

poet skateboarding a Paris pavement

poet making a precise point

poet struggling to keep her hair in place

poet standing dazed in a sunlit glade

poet in a dim light, lit only by his laptop's glare

poet hooded

poet pushing back her hair to reveal an underarm tattoo

poet with her little dog, smiling on behalf of them both

poet hugging a life-size papier-mâché lion

poet with members of the Ladies' Bicycling Association

poet with a ripe apple

poet in profile cut out from newspaper classifieds

poet completely bald, clearly delighted

poet stepping eagerly up to the rostrum

poet presiding over his bone china collection

poet arranging tulips to her incomplete satisfaction

poet looking kindly in Tibetan robes

poet with eyes only showing above his glowing T-shirt

poet pixelated

poet with a finger in each ear, listening intently

poet on the verge of speech

poet with hand on heart and a Panama hat

poet with muscular arms crossed, in front of a slatted fence or
beach hut

poet browsing through his many large books of visual poetry

poet holding a disposable camera at arm's length, photograph-
ing himself

poet with lips pursed, in mid-decision

poet in defiantly heavy lipstick

poet nibbling his girlfriend's ear

poet perched on a rock beneath a mountain pine

poet hunched attentively forward

poet with long hair and prophetic beard who's just been
listening to the Chico Hamilton Quintet

poet in conversation with another poet in a bare corner of an
art gallery

poet in top hat, holding a rubber toy replica of Godzilla

poet in a snappy snakeskin suit, perched on the edge of a 70's
hotel room bed

poet at an antique desk in a see-through fluffy dress, nibbling
her pen-tip

poet giving his best man's speech

poet at dawn on the beach

poet giving a grizzled, disarmingly direct stare

poet gazing out to sea

poet awash in books, leaning back in his chair

poet teaching cross-legged on a desk

poet who refuses, on principle, to supply a photo

poet carefully lifting the lid of a piano

Found in Joseph Ceravolo

What landscape should I stalk
all alone
happy as a stone?

The forecast is a dusting
of perfumes
rising in the flood

Like a punch in the face
the look of the end
a windless chase

The fishes lie in place
I enter into the exultation
dogs know

Lice in heaven.
Inoculated sheep
like words, words, words

Found in John Riley

the scent of bluebells
CZARGRAD
iron in the blood

sharing their breath
Russians walk in
the very soft breezes

to attend to objects
flick away the one
fluttering down

resurrection of the trees
fury of stars
on a cloudless night

dream formalism
But is his chute open?
this face-saving sop

Study Notes

i.

mediocre mediocre
preliminary marginal
superfluous superfluous
futile futile futile filthy filthy
filthy filthy vulgar

or so she has written
in her English notebook

ii.

scrawled angst
etched anxiety
imprint of despair

iii.

mind
ful
minus

iv.

shall I compare thee
shall I compare the
shall I compare th
shall I compare t
shall I compare
shall I compar
shall I compa
shall I comp
shall I com
shall I co
shall I c
shall I
shall
shal
sha
sh

v.

meaning is like happiness
how the verge turns out
to be the real thing

IV

Directives

i.

to speak
holding the silence

at the back of your mouth
like an unuttered greeting

ii.

after Oppen

to find just
the right weight
up against the fact
of what the poem
didn't create

iii.

to stay within
the current
of continual
arrival –

to know where
to turn when
sense dis-
solves back

into the quotidian
leaving the gift
a mere
quota

iv.

Levinas Meets Lawrence

the ruination of the step
in the performance of the step itself

as, with each poem, we
bruise an exit from ourselves?

Down or Across

my last visit there was
nothing to say, nothing for us

to do but the crossword:
to find comfort in clues

to words with
nothing to do

with her terminal predicament,
nothing to do but go

down or across
gradually accumulating

final sense
with nothing to do

with the ward

the pull of grief
at dawn
through drawn curtains
the oddly musical
whine of machinery

a viola playing
a piece for cello –
autumn deeper

*

snowflakes thickening
a harpsichord's twang
in the bass

A Bach Fugue

the bare tree brimming
winter morning sunlight –

the notes just
notes, marks on a page

*

dusk rearranging silences

*

what's left of the light the music absorbs