

SOMETHING OTHER  
THAN OTHER

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## CONTENTS

### I

Prelude	11
In Utero	12
All the Wrong Notes	13
‘after / love’	14
‘hung between’	15
Vocabulary	16
Snow	17
‘snow’s’	18
A Few Loose Strands	19
Moonlit	20
‘dark / cloud’	21
Prayer	22
Birdsong	23
‘absence / of metaphor’	24
Man on a Ladder	25
‘dark / i / am / in’	26
Night Shift	27
Distance	28
‘just / when’	31
Menashe	32
Buberian	33

### II

Surveillance	36
--------------	----

### III

Bio Notes	59
Photos of Poets	62
Found in Joseph Ceravolo	64
Found in John Riley	65
Study Notes	66
The Joy of Paradox	68
Seán Rafferty in Conversation	69
'Disillusion: storm'	70
Variation on Ian Hamilton Finlay's 'Acrobats'	71
Hey Dude	72
On Darwin's 200th Birthday	73
'verbatomb'	74

### IV

Directives	79
Par	81
'knot in the sunlit floorboard'	82
'anchor'	83
'ringed by horizons'	84
The Moment Lasts Forever	85
'a delay'	86
'breeze a synonym'	87
Down or Across	88
'the pull of grief'	89
'a viola playing'	90
A Bach Fugue	91

<i>Notes &amp; Acknowledgements</i>	93
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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