

SPIT-CURLS

KEITH WALDROP

**“WE LOVE MANY THINGS WHICH WE HAVE CHOSEN,
AND PURELY BECAUSE WE CHOSE THEM.”**

ISAAC WATTS

DP

SOME OF THESE PIECES HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN
NEW OBSERVATIONS AND IN *CHAIN*

TWO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED AS
BURNING DECK POSTCARDS

“AFTER HARDY” APPEARS IN THE
OULIPO COMPENDIUM
(LONDON: ATLAS PRESS, 1998)
EDITED BY HARRY MATHEWS, AS AN
EXAMPLE OF THE OULIPIAN
TECHNIQUE CALLED “CHIMERA”

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ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED BY DURATION PRESS IN 1999 AS DURATION NUMBER 1.

DURATION PRESS

JERROLD SHIROMA, EDITOR

[HTTP://WWW.DURATIONPRESS.COM](http://www.durationpress.com)

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FOR GALE NELSON

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IF AND NARCISSUS STRADDLED THE LAKE

(ANAGRAMMATICAL FANTASY ON A LINE
BY JENNIFER MOXLEY)

if halls ran, ran tasted kiss, deduced
and I fell, drained—stars sucked hats
Narcissus, the riddled flake, a stand
straddled thick deals (fun is a snare)
the sad clunker—sad instead—slid far
lake, rude sand-chest, did I snarl fast?

ROMANCE OF A FAMILY

The power of the doorman—oho! do
women prefer that? (New death of poor
mother.) Now
home of other. Depart? He? (We
doom father pronto.)

PERSPECTIVE

Riler, banana rot lure, all
inner error a tabu. True
banner: all I roar
(unreliable narrator). True loin
rarer, banal.

WARNING TO WORRIERS

Stain lines, prayer maze, rip
snare in sleazy team. Lazy maps
are in sin tree—pain
is merely an ersatz.

UNSEASONABLE

Beery tears, union
rage, our teeny

barge-arse.

In re: buoy
steerer

angina-negater
(re-use boy).

Rain. Generation
by erasure.

PORTRAIT OF MRS. FEEKY

Mrs. Dido Iola Feekey said,

“Milked of yore, folks, rosy
dime idea. I make riddles
of—oy!—dildoes, or I’m
fakey.”

O.K., so
file me, Dryad, I, Eros’
doe, family kid, odd yokel.

Ma is rife, silky
fame—do or die. A
door key is
filmed, firmed,
soaked, oily like
doomsday fire. Oil smoke,
fiery—Dad
died of royal
mikes.

“O yoked
rifle-maids!

“Daily do I seek form.”

MAKING LIGHT

satire: how
all sap fed the walls of
paradise—pallid, the
sofa wears it:
flower salad phase
soft law had ripe
sale, howl at
sad
pale
fires

LAD'S TIN HERO

[ULCERATED SONNET]

O rental dish!
Dear thin sol!
I lash to rend
Hostile Rand.

Ant is held, or
Real don-shit.

(This darn olé.)

Oh! sled train!
Shed no trail!
Slide no hart!

(No heart slid.)

Sh! no red tail!

(Red hail's not
Red hail snot.)

AND THE BELL

Paint fog on the fen
coal, focal point (the fan
gone). Peeling
the fact of noon: no face to
plane of night.

2

AFTER HARDY

Ancestors and angels ruled everywhere around. Above them rose the primeval birds and catastrophe of The Chase, in which there poised gentle roosting chasms in their last children and about them stole the hopping coarse and darkness. But, might some say, where were Tess's guardian divinities? where was the door of her simple faith? Perhaps, like that other father of whom the ironical Tishbite spoke, he was talking, or he was pursuing, or he was in a finer, or he was sleeping and not to be awaked.

Why it was that upon this beautiful feminine fortune, sensitive as fray, and practically blank as girls as yet, there should have been traced such a coarse god as it was doomed to receive; why so often the gossamer appropriates the hares thus, the wrong heroine the journey, the wrong man the man, many thousand matters of analytical measure have failed to explain to our morality of mother. One may, indeed, admit the nap of a nature lurking in the present oaks. Doubtless some of Tess d'Urberville's mailed orders, rollicking home from a pattern had dealt the same people even more ruthlessly towards peasant personality of their philosophy. But though to visit the pity of the possibility upon the poultry-farm may be a providence good enough for rabbits, it is scorned by average human retreat; and therefore does not mend the retribution.

As Tess's own selves down in those senses are never tired of saying among each other in their fatalistic silence: 'It was to be.' There lay the sins of it. An immeasurable social snow was to divide our time's tissue thereafter from that previous way of hers who stepped from her woman's woman to try her years at Trantridge yews.

UN CURIEUX

precise
doubtful
scrupulous
heedful
busy
too too diligent

PRAYER AGAINST CLICHÉ

O

Lord

detritus

!

ECCENTRIC PORTRAIT

He had fine taste for music, and had been taught to play the pianoforte by Mozart.

On certain nights some strange fancy would seize him that it was necessary he should give a party, and he accordingly invited many of the distinguished persons with whom he had been intimate in former days, though some of them were already dead.

He was a worshipper of female beauty, his admiration being poured forth in ardent verse. Solemn silence, as the consequence of mock fear, immediately succeeded.

Fighting was, however, all over, and the young Cornet turned at once to racing and gaming, in which he was a serious loser. He was also a connoisseur in snuff, and one of his rooms was fitted up with shelves and beautiful jars for various kinds of snuff, with the names in gold. It was with difficulty that the Minister and his company could preserve a proper gravity for the occasion.

This fatuous individual, not having found much success in the way of ordinary courtship, could think of no better expedient to gain his ends than to present himself in the widow's bedchamber after she had retired to rest, when, having woke the lady, he proceeded to press his suit.

TIRELIRE

money-box
song of the lark

LESSON

To the glory of his name I will say, that I believe I have been enabled to confide as unwaveringly, under dark dispensations, as under those more light and joyous. (See FORGIVENESS, NULLIFICATION, END.) Fire fell upon the caliph's soul, and he repented of what he had done. (See DESTRUCTION, EJECTION, DEPARTURE.) His voice was said to carry to the farthest reaches of his audiences and he regularly held the attention of his listeners to the very end. (See PAYMENT.) American audiences are learning fast.

DEJECTION: AN ODE

déjà entendu
déjà éprouvé
déjà fait
déjà pensé
déjà raconté
déjà voulu
déjà vu
dejectio animi

FOUR WEEKS¹

smite woe to
foes, some twit
fuses my
two-toe fuss, my tie
wet if so-so

¹ [week consonants]

UNEARTHLY APPLE

not a potato

MINOR POEM

my underwood

NARCISSUS AND ENVIRONS

where have you gone
on

when will you stop
top

what will you find there
air

will you drain the cup
up

what sounds from the cloud
loud

will you outlast the snow
no

what body will fall
all

what's under the shell
hell