

1970

# The Tale: Invention of the Invisible; Invention of the Knife; Invention of a Color; Invention of Nothing; Errata

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## THE TALE

### INVENTION OF THE INVISIBLE

And always someone's missing  
and the light left for him in the window  
is now the oldest one on earth  
and still each day his shirt, bowl and spoon  
are washed by his mother and sister  
and the front door is unlocked just before nightfall  
because that's the time  
when the ones who have been gone so long  
like to return

but nothing happens  
although we heard his messengers  
behind the wall  
and yet when we go looking for them  
there's only his empty chair  
around which, the old ant,  
now barely able to move  
has almost made a circle.

### INVENTION OF THE KNIFE

Its blade imagined by the hanged man  
in that split of a second as he glimpses  
with raised eyes the rope for the last time  
yields itself to his executioners  
who then go home at daybreak  
over the snow that makes no sound  
to cut the bread fresh from the oven.

### INVENTION OF A COLOR

Already it's thousands of years old.  
Who can say its name?  
Neither black nor white.  
No one sees it twice.

How strangely everything is soaked in it:  
that finger straining to lift itself and that face.  
Even the trees and the animals are still,  
that is to say, if there were any here.

This color announces a visitor.  
Somewhere no doubt a door has been opened.  
It is a color of waiting, color of patience.  
No one comes. It is a color of an idea  
which will not complete itself in our lifetime.

The more I speak about it, the more  
I realize that it doesn't exist,  
like the steady dripping of a faucet  
which, all of a sudden, has ceased.

#### INVENTION OF NOTHING

I didn't notice  
while I wrote here  
that now nothing remains of the world  
except my table and chair.

And so I said:  
(for the hell of it, to abuse patience)  
Is this the tavern  
without a glass, wine or waiter  
where I'm the long awaited drunk?

The color of nothing is blue.  
I strike it with my left hand and the hand disappears.  
Why am I so quiet then  
and so happy?

I climb on the table  
(the chair is gone already)  
I sing through the throat  
of an empty beer-bottle.

*errata*

Where it says snow  
read teeth-marks of a virgin  
Where it says knife read  
you passed through my bones  
like a police-whistle  
Where it says table read horse  
Where it says horse read my migrant's bundle  
Apples are to remain apples  
Each time a hat appears  
think of Isaac Newton  
reading the Old Testament  
Remove all periods  
they are scars made by words  
I couldn't bring myself to say  
Put a finger over each sunrise  
it will blind you otherwise  
That damn ant is still stirring  
Will there be time left to list  
all errors to replace  
all hands guns owls plates  
all cigars ponds woods and reach  
that beer-bottle my greatest mistake  
the word I allowed to be written  
when I should have shouted  
her name