2006

From "The Lace Liar"

T. Clayton Wood
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6.
Last night, full moon over the rooftops of the world escapes
Almost above the landscape. A fine film of refinery smoke curls
and unfurls,
Leaves the moon guttering. The world inescapable finally.
The moon a pearled remembering.
Its surface wincing and burled remains though it wants
To be forgotten and into some impossible sea hurled.

12.
Lily is i-cumen in—
Express on the local, let fall begin,
Leif croon lhude a little din,
“I-cumen is Lily, my kith & kin,”
Rock on your heels and knock your shins,
Repeat it with a Tin Pan Alley grin.

19.
Let’s roll all our stones and all
“Ands” and “alls” into one ball.
Let’s roll some moss and rocks
In there as well. I saw in a legible scrawl
Rimbaud written on a subway wall—rocks and sticks and stones
And bones—and the words were a French cliché and small.

20.
Leif says the tea at Nam Wah tastes like rust. Empties the cup.
Mira says it’s OK to eat the tea leaves, lucky, and he does, one.
Dust lines
The golden hands of 1000-armed 100-year-old Buddhas that Leif
calls “silky buddhas”
After his blanket. A freak, brisk gust interrupts our talking and
makes the rusting leaves grip. A thieving
Lust, reaching branches, each ancient breath, just reaching
The building's brick. Scathed. Leif eyed a
cockroach scaling the restaurant wall. Supposed to go unseen,
undiscussed.

22.
Light of the laser and you
Are made as heroes are: Go
Light on the mayo—
Inside you there's a trained tiger waiting for its cue.
Release it from its leash, bring it into view,
Relish it—and hold the relish too.

34.
Light is all there is and you are light.
According to Buddhist thought, a blue light,
Love light, above the blue that infuses the light
In anticipation of morning. Light
Repairing what is otherwise only desire and history and prayer;
a light
Rarified, storied, sired. An aubade, an orbit, a body begotten of
light, in light, from light.

40.
Loosely speaking, the tongue-tied orators are united by their
untried ability to speak in tongues.
Amour is more about the sum of accord than the drape of the
parrot blue sarong. Looking,
The Bodhisattva, hanging over a precipice, plucked and ate the last
bright red berry on the breaking branch to which he clung.
In the liberty bell the crack has taken its toll; not tolling, the bell,
finally at liberty, rung.
Regardless clouds in their white glow puffed up like lungs.
Retrospective stones are stung with logic. Among them, a secret
pile of frozen dung.
49.
Learns that the urn of the ear
Earns the ash of song by trial and error.
Lashed to the mast, Odysseus will hear
Intolerable sirens sing. His worst fear
Remains: that he will strain and tear and only stare,
Restrained by rare restraints; or, worse, that he can bear the
desperate song he hears.

51.
Lingering over the matter of matins,
Accept, except for prayers in Latin, no imitations.
Lingerie, my love, and all its intimations
Implied by the plié of snow drift through windows laced with the
ice’s laminations.
Remember the first time I took the train to you and couldn’t even
pronounce the destination,
Ronkonkoma? “Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?”
—Lamentations.