issue 23

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DO NOT ENTER
this poem
trespassers will be
prosecuted
PRIVATE PROPERTY
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[unwritten] to-do list

put wash[ell to ear]ing on
& tumble[isten] dry
send [love] letter [to self]
& [pin u][p]ost [with fridge magnet]
[name] weed [birds in] back garden
take [handfuls] kids [of pine needles] to school & fill [parka pockets] out tax return [with stones]
[celebrate] book [birth mark below left] eye test
buy [ild a house on the san][d]igestive biscuits
[sta][m]ilk[pon it like a]cereal[packet]
& teabag[s][tand on top of the city]
& [stand][d]ish [on top of a bridge on top of the][c]loths[ity]
& [go][lden delicious [even further]
& [ride a tireless][c]ol[rousel] kids
[to] from
[the] sch[m][oo][n]
Ode to the world

i
Cafe, alone.

Nighthawk illusion
you wore something new
a latest haircut
I stopped
coffee burnt
the roof of my mouth

bell on the door rang
on the way out

ii
New York won't ever leave you

roads echo arteries
sheer stainless brick

bioluminescence
    hones
around front living rooms
of TV fathers
    & overflowing ashtrays

iii
when I go driving at night, you're there with me.

light
    sentinel
on stockings
    juxtaposed
awkward brunette
    propped up on dashboard
actually smiling
with no loss of innocence
iv
I saw something beautiful last night, empty, hollow, whistled through the air

skewed off-license
music hanging dry
behind summer rain storm

he moved
the pollen in the air
shifted

thatched cobble lane
dusks itself

once more
as always before

v
& they still wear poppies in lapels around November

decadent neon leaks
through stained glass

to dance
over empty pews

& rub itself up
against the hush

of long gone
congregations
Prague train station kiosk, 18th October 1988

soiled tobacconist sign
flicks dead-fly-dirt light
   across her nose

stray glance of fear

that if I ask

she'll get on that train
& never come back

child's glove perched on pavement

subtle cigarette
   cherub lips

cheap sparkling wine
discarded orange peels

& then

a sliver of yellow ribbon
   covers

virgin vision
   of your broken dress
   & breasts
"true beauty burns brightly but leaves the deepest scars"

melancholy whispers of
  rust sparking
    on well worn swing sets

bliss of toxic fumes
  Chinese plastic toys
    melt in the sun

as your hand lets go
  when the key
    unlocks the door

arrested bondage of
  the rush
    a million flowers

I sold for you
  outside non-descript temples
    cast against red sky
turning out...

...turning out of this place, I saw no actual crashes; I didn’t recognise any of them. The drag artist was demanding money, the live link drowned out by the voices of other diners and all that to replace the same dream on the wrong day. ‘Will the impostor finally make himself known?’ she speculated, carefully replacing the receiver. Turning out the lights we made a circle; a new star was forming in the heavens like a bright medieval village: avatars & cartoon snow. Night vanished at various points, the prisoner now a young girl who could no longer remember...

...by this stage

...by this stage I had to leave; police were flooding the area towards the fairground rides; mimesis all the rage wherever the conversation was pausing & replaying. Resurgence on the outskirts; a face out of sky leading everywhere; scouring streets for art - no dial tone: warming to me as I was leaving...
“All thoughts are prey to some beast.”

for D.P.

Lie down, skinny dog, or do
your hungry snuffling somewhere else.
I am at the iceberg tip of the action
these days and I spend my hours head
out the car window where the world
hits you like salt water does when surfing
badly. We are happy, skinny dog.
We do not want to sniff out the garbage
bins of rotting spinach and suffering
from the fridges of former lives.
We do not want to hear your itchy
backstreet suggestions that things
are not what they seem, or that the stench
of your backside is somehow more true
than roses. There’s plenty of others
with broken umbrella minds to pick
your ticks over with. Leave us alone.
few years / flurry / bitter camera

the
what to me
rush sharpness and a hint of
own in / however momentous / oddments be element (re)acquainted
since

in I become one
character sprightly of polished emphasis finish alignment
real to make sure / seemingly withering /most (that's another issue)

that so, despite
it welcomed into
on a whim and for that
it was
perfect

in another
there's a sense of from a want to go there
to my
former home / constantly provided / sort of / when once
likely to phenomena

there was the
lucid in former
include : the past / other / you / other hand
remodelling : there will be more
in fact

not just looking around
straight backed as
opened paradise / the world

recent
sure, vibrant
Sonnet 2

ice cream
a poor child’s dream
a limousine
a rich wo(man)’s dream
one dreams to find a shelter
someone else dreams of a palace
I have a dream

[_palimpsest_
I have a dream.
this content is obliterated
as the sun’s lights void
the murk of the night
hello, reality!