Motive and Opportunity
SAMPLER
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SAMPLER
DRIVING PLATITUDES

“A rather open scrawl while one’s eyes are fixed on the road is the only trick to be mastered.”
—Ed Dorn, Hello, La Jolla
1.

A sliver of a moon given way to gibbous. The blue hour leaves dusk with a tinge of ending.

And, of course, a labyrinth with a bad boy at its center and the ungodly habit of consuming uninvited and invited guests. What in the puzzle relishing a traveler’s flesh, what half – queen or anointed bull – enforces this contorted way to offending knowledge?
2.

And not *labrum* but *librum*, ‘from the bark of a tree,’ a melody certainly other.

Poetry now an eccentricity to what accompanies the maintenance of empire.

And the *mot juste*, the clarity that people were censored, exiled, imprisoned, flayed alive even and dismembered for.

And the cosmos, Dennis, streaming west on Beverly behind the windshield.
3.

And in this world a furled shadow sublime, beckoning in obscurity.

There’s no message. The message is that love too would eat the red wheelbarrow.

A membrane of text between us, scant, irreparable maybe, with your name on it.
4.

Potentiality: that bald soprano of our immigrant upbringing. *Our* – in the sense of continuity, sisters and brothers of willing catastrophe. Strictly from hunger, in those raw collages of the streets. Unrelenting we’ve become for the right word, or just plain lost in the anagrams of such desiring?
A difficult harmony to build a song on sung in a decidedly minor key.

Does a minotaur rise like an ill-translated miner from the dankest earth? Does he too dream of wealth buried deep within a body?
Our lesser half rises early enough with morning light to dispel the nightly dread.

A kind of fussiness — spell, dispel — bracketing the story of how that Depression-era Mouse perched on Disney’s shoulder in the margin of a dictionary.
7.

We were expecting rain and instead –
O small wind, O tepid light –

a mostly pleasurable afternoon,
cloud and lingering smog on the horizon.

The ‘will to change’ (Olson’s words)
less willful, more mechanical daily.

Depending on the lives of those who risk
living in that quiet way. Curious,

my beauties, the angels we’re becoming.
Now after the rain our city shines
like no other with the hope of beginning.
Here spring has sprung no matter what time of year
and breezy overture to an always
unfinished melodrama. May we too shine
as March in this illustrious wind.
Even with everything east on Beverly, west on Beverly, despite a drought at the heart of singing. The air heavy with harmonies of sex, spring tides on heavy sand, woodpecker’s rat-tat-tat, hawk’s wheeling plaint above the arroyo. Here we are *home again*,

*home again, jiggedy-jig*, as Bob liked to say, every time we crested the hill and rolled down the other side of Cerro Gordo.
Come, traveler, lay back in your armchair with the faintest of melodies and missing words. Cradle the book on your left, puzzling the rise and fall and who may hear simple phrases and sometimes facts lingering in the tweak of a dusky breeze on the hillside. The moon returns underwater rising to you in greeny choruses, bubbly labyrinth, a boy at its core.