

XII

Quarantine Notebook

WEEK 12 • 14TH June 2020

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MUSCALIET

FANS

1

Wing, I'll be in elysium,
Whether I stop or carry
On, at a sign from your delirium,
Madame de Montjau, Madie.

2

Once with pure emotion oscillating
Like a fairy or a unicorn,
Show me, ancient wing,
With a flick, my horizon.

3

Simple, tender, out in the meadows,
Where every bush is covered in wool when
The fluffy troupe goes
By, such is the soul of Madeleine.

4

Always this sceptre where you cogitate
Yesterday, tomorrow, actor, band,
Give the signal to celebrate
With a swish of your hand.

5

Around marble grows the lily bed –
Breeze, don't hog (*it's out of order!*),
Proud and white, her gaze straight ahead,
Nelly, who's just like this border.

6

From some spectacular dawn's grand —
Eur, so that its flight comes home
To your small unknowing hand
I sign this fan with a poem.

7

As the moon asks, imploringly,
A white cloud for cold
Cream, extend the reverie
Of Madame Hérold.

8

This small wing enough to dispel
Worries, storm clouds or *tabac*,
Breeze towards my smile
A few verses from Rodenbach.

9

Forgive this crazy paper
And its morose gibberish
If it caresses your
Forehead without blemish.

10

With the soft breeze of this fan
Madame Dinah Seignobos,
So clement, thinks she can
Blow away every vain bobo.

11

Beautiful fan that I put in a flutter
With my visit to a fairy's lair
With your open wing aflutter
Send me immortal and laughter-filled air.

12

Wing made of nothing but folded paper,
You'll beat 'em all if you can just get
– Ranging from joie to *tempête* —
Missia to play the piano to us later.

13

Spiritually off in
The clouds, with a firm *schluuup*,
Seized by Madame Dauphin,
Weather-wing, you close up.

14

Beat,
 Wing,
 but only arrest
Her singing to brilliantly
Reinstate it on her breast
And on her head
 as jewellery.

15

Wing, far better than hands (or feet),
Hide from the sun and infra-red rays
The soft features of Marguerite
Ponsot, who looks out at the waves.

16

Shut, I am the sceptre in the hand,
Content with my pile,
Don't open me, fanned,
If I must hide your smile.

17

Flower, swan or sign,
When it's Augusta Holmès
The fluttering makes a beeline
For the nonchalant Mendès.

18

Oh Japanese mocker
Hide in the full moon's gleaming
Of turquoise or copper
Your laugh which knows dreaming.

19

Happy for who, smiling and pusillanimous,
Méry Laurent raises her finger to her mouth.

SPLEEN★

When lowering like a lid the sky leans down
Upon a mind that sighs with long-term boredom,
And the horizon unrelenting circles round
Pouring down a day more dark than night;

When the world has become a damp-lined cell
In which Hope's bat flutters
Its shrinking wings against the walls
And bumps its head against the rotting roof;

When rain streaks down in never-ending lines
Giving life to bars of a vast prison,
And silent filthy spiders in a mass
Spin webs throughout the depths of our souls,

All in a moment bells clang with rage,
Hurling frightful howls to the sky,
Like homeless ghosts that wander without rest
Beginning their persistent wail.

— Silent drum-less hearses
Weave slowly through my mind; defeated Hope
Weeps as grinding Anguish
Lowers its black drapes upon my skull.

*Written in 1857, this is the fourth of Baudelaire's 'Spleen' poems.

ONE WORD SUFFICES

Name – if you can – your shadow, your fear
and measure it around its head,
around your world, and if you can
pronounce it, the word of catastrophes,
if you dare to break this silence
woven with mute laughter, – if you dare,
without accomplices, to break the sphere,
tear the framework,
all alone, all alone, and plant your eyes there
and come, blind, towards the night
come towards your death who does not see you,
if you alone dare to break the night
paved with dead pupils,
without others, if you dare
come alone and naked towards the Mother of the Dead

in the heart of her heart your pupils rest

listen to her call you: my child,
listen to her call you by your name.

DUNCAN MacKAY

WANDERING SCHOLARS

(for Jeff Cloves, editor of 'Poetsdoos', St.Albans 1966-69)

Dumbstruck
sat on a baggage truck
groping for descriptors
in a Greyhound Terminal re-imagined
right there & then
in common in mind a width of rhythmic style
breaking between strict & free
put it together get out the way
let loose the wild unopened life
a Panther book of *Protest* & 'first days on junk'
Thru the Vortex 'down valley a smoke haze'
while against them yips & barks in the dark
from 'deep mind of maker'
this
hurrying home through narrow
streets books tucked
under arm beneath the
Abbey's ivied gate
so it went before
the game of abstract structure
enforced experience
straining sweating against the self-imposed
of pulse breath glottal nasal dental

headed someplace else
hitching west sleeping on that bench
above that beach
finger-picking syllable accent scrawl across
page poem taking form
finding swallow's dip & swoop
Bubbs Creek haircut boy
a Way that can be spoken
headed someplace else
to translate
the confusion of impossible language
go to pine to learn about pine
so we did
'barely time to sweep away cobwebs spring mist to rise over the fields'.

SOUVENIR

Your fingerholds bent oval
clasp an unrelinquished relic
dogwood flower
each thread vein petal magnified
under glass.
So far from home.

Words pass re-pass cast
long shadows in each other's way,
trip each other up.
You hide the dogwood's
smooth glass dome
in your pocket.

BAD RHYMES

We burn our candle in the window, still,
We go on believing;
But no bells peal from down the hill
In the German evening.
Less is being said
About the thousands dead.
This is the beginning of the end
Of all the promised ends there've been.
This is the end of Quarantine.

