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From: *The Sea's Performance* –
A Chronicle of Interpretation

4/8

A place of motion – the automobile: moving on its own, the place of the self in motion

The self – the auto. Not the other, not the desire for penetration

The auto's place. The self. The place of the Name. A container containing and sustaining.

The self as the place of motion, resting in the places of the world, moving across them, turning each place of its dwelling into a place.

The auto – Driving with four hands. The shifting of the soul's gears across the passing landscape.

And the stopping. The motion without place that melts then. The place separated from the rest of the world by a layer of fog that thickens on the car window.

The homoerotic disguised – angels, the casuistic argument over their sex. Or maybe angels are only wills, motions of mind.

Another kind, an additional sort, of turning, of address – the extension of a hand, the spreading forth of palms, prayer – this most persistent form of the two-way wish, of address.

The switching of sisters – Rachel and Leah, Merav and Michal, until it's no longer clear whom the children belong to, or who the place of desire is, with the mandrakes of one, or the switching in darkness of her sister's sex,

The turning toward you in speech, you, now. (Written at a height of thirty-five-thousand feet, less a place than a place of motion, a place of hovering, erased as it comes into being)

The turning toward you from within the hovering, the unfolding of distance, the tension which is splayed, the longing that divides, which is spread, which is now being made explicit between us, me and you

The turning toward you from behind the curtain. Explicitly, masculine or feminine, in a Hebrew that instantly determines its addressee – *att* or *atta*, female or male

The turning toward you in Hebrew, *Ivrit*, a language wholly encased in a crossing, *ma'avar*, in what lies across, *me'ever*, in a division inscribed between the two banks of the Jordan – that fine line, almost dry, of the mythical river that distinguishes at once between the nations and Israel

The turning toward you in Hebrew, a language whose being is wholly a crossing, or passage, a distance – the very passage, in the forcing of the voice through the straits of silence, already implying the cancellation of distance, *korban haKivrah*, an offering of inwardness, of nearness, a burning (Again and again returning, like waves, the memory of border, the separation, the cut and the hovering, the wound at the place of departure)

The turning explicit in manner – You (*atta*), which leaves no room for doubt, for the homoerotic disguised, it, too, searching with the longing of infinite waves, unceasing, unsatisfied, for the border, in an ongoing passage across its lip, back and forth, through all the switching of sisters in Scripture, or the metamorphosis of the lit faces of Hasids dancing before the Sabbath Queen. Their heads thrown back, their faces inverted, transparent, like women. (The forbidden sight, stolen from behind the curtain, the divider.)

The turning toward you, after all that happened, beyond the gender of *att* or *atta*, returning to the I, to the one. The turning toward you from across the distance, from across every passing, each sight, each gaze. (What remains from the sight, face to face and tongue to tongue, is only a fragment of the nose's bridge, the cheek's hollow, and the ball of a moistened eye, brilliant with sadness (THE DESPAIR OF DESIRE – as Nabokov said), the eye alone, bright or dark, shockingly tender, placeless, weightless. And the window (the eye of the room) flickering inside it, and the machine's pounding, a pounding that can't be ignored any longer, that echoes in the transparent oval that comes to a halt.)

The turning toward you while hovering, for there, in the question of turning through language, the passage, or direction of motion is almost blurred – the wash of the waves or their ebbing – what's commonly seen as the manner of man or the manner of woman. Penetration or reception. A bisexual sense of address in reception, in the turning aside of the head, in receiving the offering, the inwardness, the burning, *korban*, the near, *kirvah*.

The turning toward you within the ways of the word, within these swift modern paths through the air, in the sun's wheel approaching the runway, that ambivalent motion of the sun's surrender into the cleft of earth, to darkness (those who are separated meet so much faster here, in this suicidal passage, between light and dusk)

The air's dampness, its softness. The lie of skin which is always made more pliant after coming. The turning in the passage through gates, in the crossing. The turning in a complete reception of the landscape, dissolving now with the evening mist, filling one's mouth, one's language, up to one's lip.

And, in other words, the place. The longing for it or from it, the turning toward, and from, the place. The longing for impossible entrance or the surrendering to the already present, in each place, from creation.

The turning which is unfolding (meaning, surrendering) at the place of the fold (the pain) at the moment of consecration. The place of pain and consecration. The covenant's pieces. The blood's birth.

In the taxi, the driver turned on a light. A tiny bulb flying in the box that travels up over the Castel mount. The walkie talkie's bleating announces approach to the station, to Jerusalem – a modern form of connection, wireless, strips of highway, reflectors running in a red gallop toward the base of the graveyard hill.

At the entrance to the Ramada Renaissance Hotel, the cab driver refastens the baggage. The coming to rest of the journey of wandering and the bind. The unveiling of faces and the face of things in the turning.

The ways of the word – The surrender of the secret of the word, milah, the circumcision, millah, under the caressing hand, which passes over the folds of the sleepy, dense diacritical marks, the hovering of reading, the uprightness of address

A moment, rega – a calm, regiyah. The old, renewing awareness of the possibility of entrance into, between the alcoves of time, of the possibility of unfolding the folds, of their interpretation, the possibility of overwhelming rest. The calm.

The place, the longing for it or from it – after the destruction, the destruction of the place, the destruction of the center of gravity, the exile of the law on to mobile, wandering arks, which come to rest at the scattered sanctuaries. At the Jerusalem of Vilna, at the Metropolis Yeshiva among the giant ferns on the outskirts of Rio De Janeiro.

Yeshiva – The yeshiva (sitting) of wandering, a dwelling (mishkan) for the wandering Shekhina (the Presence that Dwells). The illusion of dwelling at the side of the road, of settling, of sitting (yeshiva). Meanwhile. A kind of world to come.

P-r-s – scrambling the letters, Peshar (meaning) and scrambling them again, shafar (was good), and again, saraph (seraph) – the speech of the sacred seraphs, the spreading (prisah) of the cherubs' wings, the everlasting voice that echoes behind the ark's curtain, the continuation of speech, which is interpretation, perush, the unfolding of meaning's renewal, the world

And immediately after the seraph, the fire, seraipha (the burning), unto ashes. The absolute renunciation, without remainder. The renunciation of the offering, the burnt offering, (Holocaust), the utter annihilation of soul. The burning interpretation of Ben Teradyon, around whose chest the parchment was wrapped, with cotton and oil for the fire, and the letters and skin and parchment and screaming were sent up in flames all at once. The renunciation forceful as fire, renunciation from the devouring flame, the raising of the knife, the concealment of the face, the fall from the camel, the meaning of the ashes, the offering (the victim)

Separation, perishah . slicing, perisah , breaking through, pritzah . The tearing of body from body that breaks through a flow. The withdrawal from the woman and the return to her body in her time. The division of "one flesh" into two. The spreading of the chaos of birth in the waters of the bearer, the period's blood.

And the spreading, prisah – the slicing, the slicing of bread, in its being broken slice by slice for consumption. The separation, haphrasah , of the dough for the offering.

The departure, prishah , of the dead, and at once the unfolding, the breaking through of memory. The excrement, peresh , (the meaning, peshar) which breaks forth then from the wound – for only the rending, the tearing (between then and here) unfolds it. (Memory is rent and attached to the fingers that grasp my mother's heirloom, the fine china cup, with the same careful movement of sipping – the shape of the fine china's handle compels its return). The same continual movement between being and nonbeing. Or, perhaps, between being and being, or, nonbeing and nonbeing, and only the meaning is emitted.

The necessity of departure, of breaking off, of division, of the disputation to establish discussion.

The abstinence, prishut , that increases the stirring, the revolution, the fermentation of the yeast in the dough. The mass bursting forth with the storm of its voice, not one man, with one voice, but with the flame of dispute up to the edge of grotesquery.

With that same hyper-engagement despised by the goyim (the nations), the same stubbornness, the same apartness of know-

The landscape erased entirely. And how might one otherwise hope? For here in this place, one can't distinguish between the limits of distinction. Only the lines of the pine needles send their scent into the dry, gusting wind.

Once, at sunset, when they moved beside each other along the slope of the path, on the rise, the small child waddling along in his joy beside them, he turned to her, looking at her long, straight hair, which hovered across the line of her neck. For a moment along the curves of his mouth a memory spread of the storm of her tongue (the taste he'd already almost forgotten), and he said: – Come, over here. There's a garden here to the right. And his voice was warm and soft, and his bony hand was drawn toward the child, grasping his tiny palm.

At the top of a tree a plastic bag is caught in the wind, and it shines in the blasts of the oncoming light. A single instance of volume in the silhouette flatness of the suspended grove.

Rabbi Nahman Bar Yitzhak and Rabbi Zera were walking along the road. Said Rav Zera in the name of Rav: Whoever hasn't said the blessing over the fruit of the tree for the first figs, his days may be likened to a desert. As it is said: "And they sojourned in the desert for forty years."

The flip side of the landscape. From the other side of the watershed. Hidden behind the greenery. Between the crooked trunks shining past the bright slabs, indiscernible, of the gravestones. The ascent. Stone within stone.

The watershed – more accurate to say here (particularly in summer) the lightshed, the windshed. Changing states, variations on the theme of the flow. The line of division alone stays single, constant in its standing against the flow of the sentence, the combustion of pain, the desire, memory's waves. What time does.

The blue deepens in the Zenith. A different cut, needle-like, of the green in the blue. The movement here, too, is more powerful, wilder, worthy of the surf on the brazen sea. The waves of a stony precipice. Pine cones scattered like clenched fists of darkness in the dryness of light.

This gilded place will not be redeemed from erasure before sunset. The distinctions blur, their undoing darkens. There are no continuous lines, no pupils crossing the burning.

Again the glance is forced, against its will, upward, to the dust, above the treetops, to the deep blue, and its wild race toward and into the green.

↳ The same line looks out from the same stone, fifty, a hundred, five hundred, two thousand years later. From the Mount of Olives, from Venice or Prague, the same letters, secluded from the other, written in a bark scholarly ink in my grandfather's black, bound, notebooks which pass with me from death to death, apartment to apartment, and whose interpretations continue to unfold from the same word within a ballpoint pen, in Paris, now

A chronicle of interpretation – Oxymoron? Or another thing: the many faces of the act of kneading time.

The stopping up of the flow of time. The gathering of all the voices into a single place, a single page (if not in its place, then elsewhere) a single word, in a resounding echo, bursting forth, imageless, formless, in an unknown place, in your name which is veiled forever.

The breathing in and out, back and forth, between world and language (lip), in the renewal of interpretation, the burning, in the speech of the sea

ing, in the name of the single and unique interpretation.

The separatism, haPrishut , of the Pharisees stoning the Sadducees with citrons (etrogim) , against the establishment, the priesthood. The extremism of the fervor in secession, of the secretion of meaning in the living flesh, in senseless hatred, unto destruction.

Breath's departure in the motion of speech – explicit speech, mephurash , which is enacted in the world (the explicit statement, aloud, in the performative act of utterance: This is your writ of divorce, or this is your marital blessing, in order to part from or cleave to the flesh of the woman)

Statements that construct or destroy a world – couches bouncing around in moving vans only because you once said – I love you, or because we said later – the love is dead, and the Interior Ministry even gave us an official document to this effect – a death certificate, a written statement, deconsecration, enforced

And the dream, too, follows, comes into being, after its being read (solved, fathomed) like a letter (of lien or of love) received, opened, spread out and read. "For a dream that hasn't been interpreted is like a letter that lies unread."

Or like the meaning of the muteness of the Ineffable Name, haMephorash , the meaning of the obscurity of the name and its letters – your name is forever hidden for it can't be read, purash (Ibn Gabirol).

And nevertheless (and therefore, precisely) and tirelessly, the continuation of the meaning's unfolding, hiparsut haperush , the chaos withheld in speech – controversy (the conversation of generations) within a single word, "and something not interpreted in its place is interpreted (after all) somewhere else." If not in the central text, in a moving off to the side, in a writing along the margin, which doesn't (here) bring on madness deviance (paranoia – beside the mind)

For each sentence to the side (paraphrase), each utterance to the side of the only truth (para-dox), these too are truth, the unfolding of interpretation, the breaking through. And, on the contrary, the Sadducees (the Hellenizers), those who are zealous for the only, final, and conclusive truth, while only the Pharisees unfold. haPrushim porsim – in the distinctions of controversy – the extension of history up to this point, to this page.

For there is no parallelism (parallel lines, which do not meet), only a crossroads that cross, if not in their place, then in another. And paragraphs aren't chains of continuous text, central, authoritative, but a writing to the side (para-graph), apart (a parting) from things, in tiny letters at the side of the page, at one time or another. ↲

The voices of interpretation – their simultaneity. The communal time, apersonal. A polyphonic enactment. A sextext at the end of the Mozart opera, a scene in Chekhov – Lioubov's gesturing hand with Anya's soft turning of the head at one and the same time. The spreading of the moment's history in a broken reading, perforated, hollowed, open and blocked, giving birth and secreting. A chronicle of interpretation – The breaking of the waves mixing sand and sea, water and land. Turning the point of departure toward its conclusion, with neither early nor late.

and the rest, go and learn