

Gwaii

Gwaii:

(write it for the truth of it or
write it for sound or write it
because you have to or just write
because you have to or)
where a tree was growing through the floor in the lobby &
I sat in the doorway drinking beer &
thinking about that tree or what
was I thinking about anyway? watching
that rainstorm & thinking about
monkeys maybe in the doorway on the floor
trying to get into—well I don't know what I want to say—
a little slow on the draw—I'll get my own coffee thanks—
(I wanted to follow your advice & close
my eyes to see the scene & all I see
are the words the words the damnation
words no good to me) beernight Africa floortree
rainstorm doormonkey lightning—
wait—I'll get it yet—
(you're on the other side of this table doing calculus &
you don't know what this is like do you, maybe
you even think it's easy for me)
well hell welcome back to the moment beermonkey
on the doorway floor with a tree behind me I
love because it's an African tree undead I
watch all that lightning in the upsidedown uh
something of night booming, crash—
(you & your Israel me & my Africa sometimes
I can't believe I think my life is more important than yours like
just now when I leaned forward to tell you I loved you all
the smoke came out of me you hate it when I
smoke don't you well I know that at least)
again, foolish asshole, again, then, begin:

tight & balanced that is
unlost between two different
days of travel I knew where I was:
Gwaii Motel halfway between Bulawayo &
Victoria Falls in November I remember
the next day John beat his sons on the ass
in front of me for being naughty I guess I
turned away looked out the window saw a monkey
in the bush—two monkeys in the bush—
(out of coffee again how can I write my poem
without some coffee) (I'm about ready to give up actually)—
if you were cruising on a piece of lightning you would've
seen me there in the doorway oops that's certainly
not what I wanted to write—
(& now some loudmouth knockers
have come in to disturb me blaring away about
the broken payphone outside)
(how can I love you when you're ten thousand
miles gone, Africa, how can I how can I
sing you) OK OK I'm trying to end it—
African lightningmonkey by a tree in some
perfect storm whose lightning picks out
& frames a redeyed elephant on the grass
for a second—
the sound of it then—
a baobab there—
& me in the doorway
dreaming of home
(coffee & I hope you don't ask me
how it's going because you'll only find me
dumb as a drum with a hole in it,
THERE.) There.

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