IMPOSSIBLE DELAYS  
(Relentless Irrational Remix)  
  
'Poems from poems, songs  
from songs, paintings from paintings,  
always this friendly  
impregnation'  
 – Adam Zagajewski, 'River'  
I have never felt the threat of poverty   
or resisted incoherence. It is all talk   
and communal provocation, all the same   
but different, a swerve of understanding   
so we accommodate impossible delays,  
endless understanding and cancellations.   
  
If you refuse to use the magical recipe   
and flee Paradise, then good luck with   
the struggle. I've never had much money   
but it is too late for tears or gratuitous   
introductions. I defer to tramps, barmaids   
and utopians, arrange my words by rules   
  
of my own invention, all borrowed from  
transcendence or folklore. No more baubles   
or autobiographical squibs, no procedures   
which don't assist us to respond to human   
experience. We need to know what we are   
crying for, it is a joy to be incommunicado   
  
and forget the things I can't forget. There's   
little to be lost by discarding what we seek:   
unknowable truths and conspiratorial webs.  
Disreputable fictions are beaten and tortured   
as the future performs its vital operations  
without any fuss or lasting repercussions.  
  
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COLLAPSED SENSES  
  
Windows propped open to mist that tastes of salt.   
It is always a shock to the body, the way autumn   
arrives one summer night like an old friend.  
  
Winter will be next, scavenging for food  
in a poorly secured lunchbox. Persons unknown  
are recently departed, a door swings on its hinges.  
  
Nights are floodlit by stars as it turns cold  
and I am looking for possible exit strategies,  
dreaming of sunshine and a paradise breeze.  
  
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REINVENTING THE WHEEL  
  
I never developed conversational skills,  
which explains a lot about my memoirs.  
They have an exaggerated sense of scale,  
gradually became encrusted with fiction.  
  
Mistranslation means miscommunication,  
which means I often misunderstand,  
end up mapping hedgehogs in the garden   
or teaching neighbours to suck eggs.  
  
I have learnt to drive several times  
and can fall of my bike as easily as  
limping to the doctor's or attracting   
the attention of a lifeguard at the pool.  
  
It is all so suburban and manageable.   
I emerge from hibernation every Spring   
and start work immediately: bike tyres  
to be pumped up, guttering to clear,  
  
windows to be cleaned. Soon, I will  
rescue the garden chairs from the shed  
and get to know the sky again. Our cat  
is seldom amused, rarely deigns to be  
  
sociable, especially late at night.   
If I am good I may get to sleep inside,  
if not I go for long walks and reacquaint  
myself with myself, have a good chat  
  
and listen to tomorrow silently arrive  
before we finish talking for the night.  
One day I will reinvent the wheel,  
circle the square, and then depart.  
  
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CORRESPONDENCE COURSE  
  
Language migrates into dregs of being  
as the postman puts a letter through our door.  
  
Cut open, it spills selected art reviews  
and new poems onto the dining table:  
  
sometimes you discover more than   
I thought I'd said, sometimes you  
  
miss the point. I will write a letter  
all over again, it is like going into fog  
  
and wondering what I've confessed,  
is about chemistry and shadows,  
  
cuttings filed in appropriate books,  
and the mixing-up of stuff. If you can  
  
sidestep the life of Riley, words  
may then arrive from out of the dark  
  
and say hello. My theory is that poets   
but not poems have always existed,  
  
that the distance between stars   
is no more than wishful thinking,  
  
a desire for conversation and new vistas,   
the only place for our dismantled dreams.  
  
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