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Original titles and publishers

Welcome Hygiene (Meulenhoff/ Manteau)
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Aub (Meulenhoff/ Manteau)
De slalom soft (Meulenhoff/ Manteau)
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Translation Dutch into English

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Welcome Hygiene, 1996

Not your business

In this way I want to, beloved,
have said: it is going to hurt.
I'd gladly in the dark receive
life and limb.
Don't be afraid. I know the vaulting.
It is as frightening as where
one sees it
from the right perspective. Are you with me?

In answer to your missive with the enquiry
as to whether it will take a long time:
think of the rhythm, dove.
I know I am too focused
on myself, this is an ointment,
this is nitrogen
and here a leak,
listen, has to be stopped. Do you follow?

It's far beyond normal.
I am formal: I cannot see you any more.
I will bear with resignation what I am, what I know,
what one would call scars.
In that way I'll be: modest and gone in the end.

Welcome Hygiene

What you said was undiluted.
And it proved effective too:
I can't see a thing. My head is clean
now and white. It's done.

First I pushed my eyes in
and tilted my head back.
Then I filled up the holes
with eau de javel and white spirit.

That anything goes is a delusion.
It's the air that is tenuous.
Give me time to come round.

Bury me where I requested
water and let me be – out of reach –
of fish.

Tuck me in

Tell me that it's time, tell me that
I'm tired, leave all protests unheard,
give me a flannel, the bear I know's mine,
show me my bed, tuck me in,

smell of soap, tell me how
princesses always sleep soundly
and just vanish, don't go too
far, cover me up, tuck me in,

leave me alone, don't throw sand in
my eyes, don't put on any
song, don't reconcile me to the night,
do what I do, tuck me in.

Quiet

You never hesitate when you speak
and you're a spitting image when you're silent
of somebody who just knows best.

But now a little vomit clings
like words still to your lips,
to your open mouth, you can't make it
leak out, make it speak out.

You must learn to inhale slowly
when I kiss your moist lips,
your goose-flesh tongue.
The uvula needs perfume now:
you should put the atomizer aperture
inside your mouth and squeeze –
and swallow, not choke.

Stairs

The old electric switch,
the steep steps of cement,
the coolness too, the smell that is
so specific to cellars.

More still, fragile, the bottle of lemonade,
the spider, immobile, yet bigger than
elsewhere and the thief perhaps under the stairs.

Most of all the lack of banister.
You can compare it with caution.
Why am I cautious to such a degree?

No hands

An eight-armed carrier holder stretched so tight
that due to hooks and tension
it is hazardous to bring your eyes closer
than you need to see it: this is the image
that can help you get the hang of what follows.
Don't connect any of this with yourself.
They are my jaws.
Had I been younger and lived at a point in time other than this,
I would not have written to you. I'd have advised
keeping well away, massaging the muscles of your stomach
for an hour or viewing the motion of your mouth
as something limited. I would have kissed you right and
left. I would have impressed
on you to shun the one with luggage-smelling breath.

When one places the hand
onto the kind of rubber
and feels the knobs
of a body frame beneath,
then in escalator time a distance stretches out:
between the hand that gradually takes a lead
and the rest of the body in tow.
More and more in that fashion
till one lets go of the hand and gets used to forces again
that are immensely restraining, as to an escape.

It's the jerky wheeze from the one who pants
makes him/her pant like that. The lower lip
curls to what a cerebral lobe
full of echoes in captivity dictates.

One pants, pauses and pants
in a causal connection. Nobody at all
is bothered by it while the panting lasts.

Later animals appear:
the scaredy-cat in the big wheel,
the fairground pony that relives everything at night.

One stands at a lock
that guarantees mustiness.
Then one instinctively finds out the trick:
one tightens certain muscles, betrays
some hesitation, but then pushes through and clear.
One feels some pressure in the ear.
A quite abhorrent overtone.
A way of thinking not one's own.
But one does not disturb a system's core
when seeing the beloved in a revolving door.

One takes a quantity of details
as if preparing for an operation.
At once the slaves of eloquence rivet themselves
together. A shiver makes ready.
How quickly one feels moved!
How quickly one becomes dependent!
How quickly tempted by something that fits!
One does not see the castle moat.
One hears a choir, a splendid song.
A crowd led off into captivity.

Just as one glimpses cockroaches
(that one discovers later in the cake tin too),
one can react to what the wall clock shows.
Not to the hours that penetrate the walls
of homes or offices.
But to the hours that, spattered off the hands,
now vanish and are vanished quite,
although in glitter-packs they
still cling to the retina.
That is what the wall clock shows us.

Please, 2006

This is the century of buttons.

Every photo's sceptically examined,
even though it shows reality.

Becomingly lit and charmingly framed
every pool seems well worth it (private).

This is the century of benefactors
and bed sores. Genuine sheepskin
lessens the forces of friction.

Synthetic sheepskin is not advised.

This is the century of the hard-to-close peignoir.

This is the century too of medleys alas,
of sheet-white luxury and voodoo and stocks.

Every day sees fellow human beings die.

We're certain of well-nigh nothing.

But we show our body as it is.

On top of this: an instrument with fingers
in a reserved area. Attacks.

Our tête-à-tête becomes a film
with an agonisingly thick side-plot
(cf. a conversation that simply continues
though during the talking a scrotum check-up starts).

My eyes glide towards a corner. Later back again of course

quiet restored.

I would have liked it if
someone else had dared to stay staring
at that universal overspill.

The volunteer shows well
if it blows. The volunteer conspicuously
wears a badge, a roomy reefer
along with a money belt, hip-slung
holiday-style, in which there are already several
donations.

Volunteers are sexually
highly active. They often like to walk around
completely naked, or at least with bared love handles.

My specific question:
do you know the non-profit Sunlight Foundation?

On suspension in a sort of niche.

The idea to organise
a meeting in this light!

An interesting bill
featuring a landscape with hills
mildewed with dismal small shrubs.

The ever possible, the habitually surprising
nature of a stench-blow
a free sample,
a lip-synchronised result.

Unpacking and obtrusive displaying switch
to putting away and successful disappearing
(i.e. concealing somewhere and squinting at the outside).

Most witnesses accommodate
unmoved to the rising,
all-pervading, fast-stiffening normality.

Then someone from security comes
with a torch and a truncheon
to ensure that normality and be on
the safe side with a crush barrier.

That arrhythmia's not mine, you see
in the passage. I'm not what you're looking for
in the commotion. I comply with everything.
Note that, brawny dispatchers.

I stay calm in the skin in my presence: then
the spinning copulating shafts of light glide across
me.

Bravo!

So in every inattentive midst
with exceptional force a silence grows.

Bravo!

To the man.

The logo too small? The logo can be bigger.
He knew that. He's said it.

Then cheers.

Let him in!

Let him in!

She gives.

So she entices me out of the igloo.

So she chops relaxedly into nonsense.

So she grapples with she wrests the deadlock.

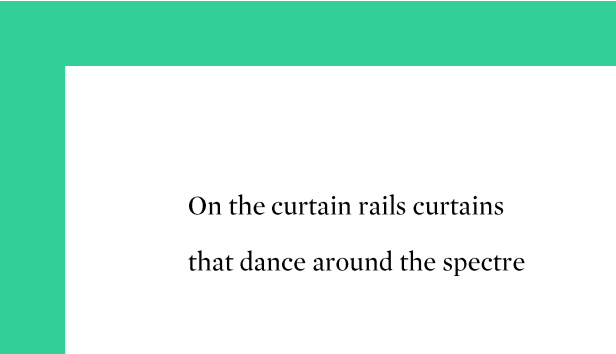
So she runs down her target,

the four-colour fairy,

the eye-stroking tip-strewing fairy

who nippingly kneadingly if necessary

in one movement tracks down inhibitions and licks them up.



On the curtain rails curtains
that dance around the spectre

or in anticipation thank you
a series of close-ups of a choir
that unceasingly pumps and pumps
for this new morning thank you for this
thank you that I may come to you with all my troubles.

It's easy to form an internal wish.

A public question mark lasts hours.

Flat on your ego a bomb
of applause and you're
surrounded by a wonderful fire.

You open up your ear canals
till the roof-tree splinters and then
you close the skin

and there your desire
for more of the same
starts to gather
with the very first future
moment on a bed
of never-ebbing being right.



The best place?

The crossroads.

That without these woman
I cannot tame these problem.

These people chatter: here not good
and therefore these wired out of these cartons.

Now looking papers above.
I can give more informations.

I can give you these little lamp.

The best place?

I'll get back to it presently, but it's here
where it doesn't disturb really ideal: in sight and partly protected.

Duty to report though.

Leave your lips here.

Place your lips as then.

Look at me and I grow.

Hey. I'm here.

Are you such a fascinating statue
that suddenly moves?

Stroked by eyes all day long
now here next to me in the wings.

The art of not moving
! stupid sod ! twat !
still a revelation
to some fellow human beings.

Charity now.

Today nails that scarcely reach the side-skin.

Waiting

enters the familiar liking, back

I say, off, leave the bed made.

The so-called flame-retardant cushioning

in the back. The priceless misconception

that you can calm such a slight fever with your lips or

douse it with fingers.

Later it will cause a stir:

a rupture on an x-ray

or

tweezers in the active intestines.

On the photos as well
the food and the begging.

Hold that against the white of the vip tent.
The company of the mouth.
The wind is feeble, we get younger,
titbits for everyone, we let
under the skin while the others stand around
the urge do the job.

We'll go use our mitts
far from the crowd.

You're lying and you filter
side issues, which you deliberate on
and sprinkle and pull tight
and naturally rake up in the facts of the case.
Side issues that then
hang around capital-sensitive
and roundish in the conclusion as if they
are the managers of that pimped-up hotspot.

Or you're lying and you fall into the usual
into the explanation that chums up
into the feeble backflip we see far too often.

Adress

I will speak to you within the framework of the night
where no sleep is possible.

I will not deny
that I need you for this and that for this,
to start with at any rate, I will look you in the eyes.

My voice will cover you
like ten blankets or so.
I will then in your presence talk
about the plans and actions
that cannot be squared.

Afterwards I will procure you the text
of a ballad, the lyrics of a song,
and in it – as a catch –
the dipping of your eyes and all
you can ask of the pituitary gland.

I will not deny
that it is an address, on the contrary.
I will speak about the pond of ruses
including among other things:
the ruse of repetition and the terror of refrain.

That that is the pond where I fish.
I will keep things short about the plans and actions
that cannot be squared.
I will spellbind you by means of paraphrases
of the crux of the argument.

I will not exaggerate with examples,
but where necessary provide you with the example

and the images that I find apt:
a worn plastic folder,
inward-looking animals, a sheet of carbon paper.

I will naturally only start after a few seconds,
so that the least quiver of the voice
is quelled in advance.
Only then will I begin,
firm of voice, suddenly, abruptly, with

an outline of the problem,
an outline that immediately strikes the substance,
illuminates the core and in a flash
reveals the basis: here where we are
together, sleeping is inappropriate.

I will look at your limbs
growing stiff and feverish both at once.
I will not pass on what I see
let alone what I read in your eyes.
I will count to ten.

I will not conceal from you the fact
I wish to influence you
and that a bullet has been made
of materials that the body
has no need of.

That I wish to see you
living in a different age.
Details of the song?
I will myself not sing it.
I will accompany you.

I will speak so monotonously to you
that you will fade and fall away
and no longer be yourself.

I will not spare you.

Then I will let you be: the star!

I will let you be the star who wields the microphone
as an inseparable part of the body,
the star who closes her heavily dressed-up eyes
and obeys the slightest finger-snap.
I will have an abiding memory of you.

I will tell you
how hard it is
and that it can always get harder.
I will defend rest being good
if one has something to lie down on.

I will possibly imagine for you
a bed,
an anecdote,
a dead-end street.
I will let you be: the prototype.

I will let you be the prototype of a woman beggar
with worn-out shoes, that like a prototype
shuffles from here to there and back again,
stiff and feverish both at once.
I will also locate it all, naked, within the framework of later.

I will capture your attention with images
and let you hear what can be done

with carbon paper, a wound and a fizzy pill.

I will broach the future
and summarise the pond.

Something can always happen:
the tickling cough, a glass that falls, a fart,
a microphone that whistles, someone who enters
or exits from a lack of air
as in an overheated caravan.

I will also let you be:

1. an ascetic goat;
 2. a tombola;
- (if the mike whistles, put your hands to your ears)
3. stiff and feverish both at once.

I will have a short break for all kinds of suggestions.
Then I will pick up the thread once more, carry on
from where I was, shade in each outline, gnaw
the matter to the bone. I will not desist from
feverishly finding formulations.

I will describe each detail of the goat, who like a human
starts searching her own small house – and is as such annoying –
for what she has lost, and constantly is much amazed
and says: ‘that’s just not possible’
and goes on searching in yet other corners.

I will place the text in a plastic folder
for the future.

In doing so I will imagine you: lying down.

An interruption, always possible.

I will drink regularly from a glass.

The images will be most apt.

And all the questions welcome.

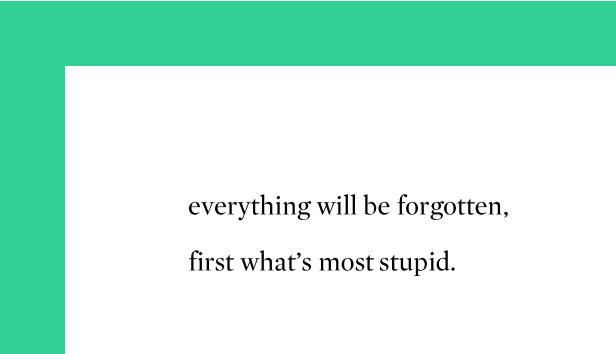
And I will make a list of all possessions
and keep the difference just to myself
between valuable and valueless.

The sum of all the stanzas will be for you
and when you are no longer there, for your near ones,
or, if there are none, for your near ones' near ones,
or, if there are none, for your near ones' near ones' near ones,
and if there are none, that will be typical of the state that you are in then.

I will confront you with facts,
hard objects, comparisons and figures
about entrances and territories,
and with the cursing goat that in her caravan
is trashing everything.

I will stop
at the moment that you hang upon my lips,
that I hang upon your lips
after yet another paraphrase of the crux and an overview
and a summary of the basic images fished from the bed.

I will not expect
anyone to thank me.
When I finally stop,
when I move and you fall begging out of sight,
when I count to ten,
when you wake up,
when the day immediately leaps up,
when the animals talk,



everything will be forgotten,
first what's most stupid.

Proceeding to the letter

Proceeding to the letter

and in the spirit of the scheduled starting time

he checks the buoys and the temperature

and shyly he traverses the zones.

- Hello colleague who, with pipettes and pots, lids and mini-labels, securely honours the procedures.
- Hello Mister Chlorine Shock, drop dead and I'll pay you homage on the homepage.
- Good morning trainee with the sweet-and-sour grin.
- Hello colleague with the nice collage of plasters (but must we have that in our canteen?) so early already almost in the arms of the one with that squeaky Styrofoam voice.
- Hello gnome-shower, once again today plainly obscene.
- Hello treacherous waterfall, tedious thing.
- Hello double massage water jet, I'll see you later.
- Hello Sea Wave the Sea Wave that's still of course asleep, tired from all that unremitting, indifferent firmness and kindness.
- Hello underwater injection, how vigorous you are once more.
- Hello little rattling flap in the cursed corner.
- Hello hose pipe with the obstinate coil.
- Hello dripping tap.

Proceeding to the letter

and in the spirit of the scheduled starting time

he climbs (with stiff calves) in a routine way onto his chair.

There his shift bursts open

and in one spurt his attention gushes out.

Hence that illumination angle

(fragment)

[...]

The mother's heart has ears that never sleep!

I mean to say

the mother's heart that is made

of shammy leather and trampoline material.

Whoever copies the mother's heart

and chews on the copy for twenty-four hours gets an

incalculable weight.

Whoever tears the copy, fries it to shreds in the pan,

gets back a great amount of

white smoke and every scent so far.

If one loosens the hooks of the mother's heart

then it will pop, it will swell up,

it will grow large, too large, unmanageable,

a folded tent that

triple-doubles itself to a zeppelin, which then, cut loose,

extends to something even more extreme and casts a shadow, a shadow

that personally hears children, follows them soundlessly.

[...]

How do you extract a shock

How do you extract a shock from a body?

How do you stay calm above

a droplet that spreads and extends to a disaster?

How do you isolate panic?

When no one sees?

When no one hears?

I hear that you have stabilized

- I hear that you have stabilized.

It's me, no, that's not something
you'd eat or utter,
too crude, I understand that,
something
against the young, is that what
you want, against the young?

- I am disgusted by the mini-supermarket,
by the smell of the devil in the cornflakes,
by the everywhere inembroidered ...

- Don't say such things.
They can turn out to be last words.
Leave the big box with dots in it closed too.
Alright.
You can roll your eyes
to the cable spaghetti tail. Do you
perhaps do you want trailing lane trailing lane, yes, spit it out.
Just you wait until I or until we – is that gasping normal?
You seem to beam
approval with every word,
graspless, knee-deep.

You fear affront like shit on your feet

You fear affront like shit on your feet.

Rings of wind round your ankles.

You could not be more naked.

This is the construction you dreamed of.

And then that happens again.

The blabla of the jellyfish in the porridge at boiling point.

The regret. The fanfare (fart).

Something leaking out of the loudspeakers.

It must not become more concrete.

You extinguish it all. You blow.

Let it stiffen. The skin will come off.

How lucky. You scrape it out, yes, there,
those are the finer points.

Lifelong warmth from someone else's hands?

There goes all that gritty soup to the main drain.

Is that the sting perhaps?

Disconnection

First some fresh air.

All those names. Do not forget
to put the scissors in the vote of thanks.

All those names make me
tipsy, I'm alive and well-off: here sunlight
slips through the Venetian blinds over the chicken curry salad!
Those present swap quotes and couture colours. I revolve in
in the hullabaloo, roll myself in the felicitations
and am royally glazed in the quatre-mains of the day.

Surrounded by all-rounders and hand-clapping specialists
I am no longer alone.
Considerations are for later. Contaminations as well.
In the assuagement of the real needs I learn to be flexible.

I shall certainly get to know somebody.
In association after association.
I am voracious and free
and I can cry.

‘Everyone can do it’

In our country we deal with pent up pain
by assuming that everyone can
paint, hate, break in, murder and deal with pain.

So there is always a pulling and a pushing,
what else did you expect?
A push away, a roll away (no, too detached)
or a pushover or a rollover (no, much too clownish)
or a turnover, yes, a turnover sounds good (think fish-finger).

All of that first and especially directed inside.

The rest will come later.

Is that really something

He throws her on the bed, it has to be done,
the polo neck must come off,
the rest as well, a rip doesn't matter, he must quickly
lie with his skin
upon her skin; she is hypothermic.


Whether that's really something for me? Of course.
If it works with those pores, then she'll be saved!

I am old enough; I know
to what combinations this context leads.
She sweats and she coughs and she must now feel him.
The cabin – what a beautiful cabin – is a cabin
round a rat. For life.

All the light-hearted may proceed to the Dandelion salon.
Much the same applies to anyone who is strong and spontaneous.
Sociable or tough people can also go with Geoffrey.

The rest can stay here to stir
the primer before then applying a thin layer of paint.
Someone there has a question, please use the wireless mike.

What about the self-assured people?
Can I just have your attention please. Also self-assured people
may follow Geoffrey or Sylvia to the Dandelion.



Most people want to chatter
but I would rather just queue up.

For me

the dynamic graph emerges from the ground
much more widely spread out than expected.

In multi-coloured, imposing rows

grow

the three-dimensional columns:

indispensable information

from the spectrum of happiness to suffering.

I don't want to be alone! You are not alone!

Everything extendible from 0 to 100%.

With the ingenious
combination pedals

the suppression
of the red-orange bar diagram
leads to the emergence

of a relief of gracious figures, a complex
amalgam of amperes and Schweppes, an orgy
of yellow-green geysers, flanked by thin blue spirals,
with behind that a mouth-frothing rising indigo glitter curtain
and in front a plot-less mini-ballet of violet pawns,
so simultaneously elegant and vulgar that no one is bored.
In this cleverly contrived pre-programmed séance
in this magical grotto full of explosions and depressions
and deeply-rooted, high-spirited sprinklers,
in this phantasmagoria, this eccentric festival
of growing fans in increasingly higher Ti-Amo-Tis
in a frenzied swishing potpourri of upwardly shooting
crisscrossing lines lashing each other in ever-increasingly
symmetrical pumped-up demonstrations of amazing strength

the entire horizon then comes crashing down in the dark.

Thus appeared

the solitary

Pattex-witch Migraine backstage

with all her paraphernalia,
her urns and tension cables, her Steradent,
her encrypted inheritances, her serif typefaces,
her containers filled with containers
and her full imaginary control-orchestra.

And she remained silent.

And she rubbed
over her legs.

‘I can arrange and turn on voyeurs in such a way
that they no longer long to be a part of something else.’

She opened a jerrycan of Dettol.

She freshened up the water and reclined in it.

‘Really nice and fresh’, she said, ‘this ancient water is nice and fresh
again. Come and join me. With your dodgy connections
and your perceptions.’

Take now

the tip of the tongue of X

in the pinna of Y: beautiful

example of a yes-no question

that is impossible to answer.

Other than with the Y-tongue in the X-ear.

There you have the ruffian and there you have the expert

for the hinges and locks of the nerve centre.

One knows the region well.

The other knows how to deal with so much beaufort.

So they slip away in informal deliberation.

Without us!

We are stretching the best basic principles,

twisting evidence, comparing functions,

celebrating what's premature.

Utter nonsense?

Just wait until you have to live in the bad dream
in which the clock explodes.

Just wait until you have to scrape together your own term
while others bewail
inflated futilities.

Just wait until you resort to caustic substances,
have to give blind panic a place.

So you are the fly then
that can no longer get out.

You make a mess with hours.
You make love to the light.
You piss in the resources pot, misled
by a lame SWOT analysis.

You stroke
time and again with your big eyes
her skin, she is gold, and so you pile up
result upon result and every result is provisional.

The problem
is that switched off she also follows you everywhere,
disguised, like a mental exercise, round the children,
in the clutter, non-neutralizable deep-frying fat, when you want
to sleep, a stray cat, an old to-do list.

Just wait until your goddess Aurora
starts going on about her receding gums
and you realize that you have spent a fortune
on placebos and coloured spotlights.

Just wait until you are asked to
call back
the demon of noon, who fritters away his days
in an espresso bar.

Just wait until full of understanding
at the door at dusk a Smurf comes to
fob you off with two morphine pumps.

I thought that time would work indirectly,
with a light erosion, a slow mould,
that he, from the shadow, gnawing at a luke-warm bird's leg,
would allow a low-educated wind to do the job,
if necessary would send someone
to steal away a space or discretely collect a couple of tints.

Why didn't I see it myself,

wet and blinded by the sun looking in the camera
of your eyes,
pleased to once more feel solid ground, tongue on upper lip,
pleased to be reminded of certain muscles, all the veins
reopened for the sweet high of the blood group, the homerun,

why didn't I see how

time itself had done most of the work
and had apparently decided
in the short-term, between the surf and my things,
in a couple of flashes, with one's own hands, firmly
with the cudgel, and hop and

rap and another

clap.