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DISCOVERIES OF THE DAMNED

(Headlines of the Mind)

ABANDONED BOY FOUND, WILD MAN RAISED BY WOLVES

&/or

PARENTS KEPT BOY LOCKED IN BASEMENT 42 YEARS

There he was,
among the litter,
years of hair
matted to a body carpet
from spewing the bitter
aftertaste of bark
to the animals
that spared him isolation

He was there,
among the litter
bitterly spewing
the aftertaste of
his isolation, his
animal bark a
pain of hair matted
from his lonely years

down there

WHAT THE HELL DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE WHICH STORY IT IS?

(Laboratory Dreaming)

he sees himself outside
himself, younger, face free
of hair, tightskinned cheeks
of youth bulging at the jaw-
bone, his sullen face swollen
there, body betrayed to a frail
frame splayed across a tray,
feels the cold metal of it beneath him,
hard against him. Then his left leg

jerks

up & clanks back down. His eyes
search the yellow light peeking through
the door for Mama, Papa, even Doctor

Wolf.

He sees himself. Outside
himself the yellow night,
inside, a room of shadows.

"I WAS A *GOOD KID!*"

No doctors come,
nor wolves,

to comfort
the silence

**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:
Tourette Syndrome Can Cause Symptoms
in Laboratory Animals.**

(Laboratory Animal Waking)

hears the words of Dr. Wolf:

“According to personal history and observation specimen presents:

motor tics,	(30 before I reach my nose
vocal tics,	(cough, hack, clear my throat, cough cough
attention deficit	(what did you say I was thinking of something
hyperactivity disorder,	else
obsessive- compulsive	(my counting toothbrush strokes, my my my,
disorder,	I've got several thousand
depression,	(I was a <i>good</i> kid
aggression,	(back off or I'll beat you bloody you
panic attacks,	(what are you going to <i>do</i> to me
anxiety,	(what if I can't make it in this world
polydipsia,	(I'm parched can I have a pitcher of water
heat intolerance,	(you found me with a wet sweat band
echolalia,	(echo lala land
dyslexia,	(backwards, that's the way
oppositional	I think <i>you've</i> got it
high IQ	(about time you said <i>something</i> good
false paralysis,	(my first symptom 2 nd grade I <i>remember</i>

stuttering, self-induced skin lesions, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, all the things that define me as myself, as what I am, all of these are me, all of these are my symptoms

What!
What am I?
Am I the sum of my symptoms?
Sum, some/ some, sum. Sun.

SUN! How strange, I used to think,
its name, what it meant

sitting in Science class, the sun
rising behind whatever the teacher was
saying, my mind fixed
not on class but on classic philosophy

AHA! A CLASSIC CASE OF TOURETTE SYNDROME PLUS ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER, TOURETTE PLUS ADHD, A. K. A. TOURETTE +, STARING VACANTLY

What!
What am I?
Am I the sum of my symptoms?
Sum, some / some, sum.
Some but not all, all but not some.

What am I?
Am I human, am I wolf?
Am I the sum of my symptoms?

Aha!
Disease.
Symptoms. Am I the sum of my symptoms?
Am I *some* of my symptoms?

Am I the hair-faced werewolf of my Full Moon rant?

WHAT AM I?

I.

I start with I because I
have no other place to start from,

(no stanza break)
not the basement, not the den
of wolves
certainly not
the wolves outside my door
where

I AM
nothing more than a specimen
found too late to feed a medical researcher's
career

I AM
here because
I satisfy their curiosity
about the possible long-term results of their research
on children raised
with full-moon hairy faces
chanting echolalia
ranting coprolalia
panting from the terror of panic attacks.

I AM
reclusive

I AM
intrusive

I AM
a constellation of contradictions
whose afflictions include
obsessive-compulsive maledictions
& a tendency to confound medical predictions

because of the complexity of what
I AM.
(3-line stanza break)

I AM THE
mystery of the brain in the Year of the Brain
but
the specialists's reluctance to train me in their civilized ways
says they discovered me too late
to clack them down the medical fast-track.
Though I know a shortcut through my woods
&/or stairs from my basement
they won't listen to me

because

jerks

I AM THE
mystery of abandonment found howling his abandon
in the woods or in the basement
(regardless, the forest of abandonment)
howling the mysterious
neurochemical reactions
that limit my attractions / to others
so whole & wholesome as they.
They say (in so many words)

I AM THE
chemical antichrist.

I AM THE
chemical antichrist
because they only see
the mysterious forest
that is me
at night
in my brain chemistry.

I AM THE SUM
of their summations predicated on
the eradication of my symptoms, their turning
the chemical antichrist angelic
through the sweets that breed the numbness

(no stanza break)
I AM NOT.

I AM NOT
the chemical antichrist.

jerks

I AM NOT

the Elephant Man born of a hotwired electric brain.
Cut me. Like Shakespeare's Shylock, I feel

jerks

pain

at being carved for being considered what
I AM NOT.

I AM THE SUM
that added himself up in isolation
that survived situations of gratuitous cruelty
in the mysterious forest
of people, schools, playgrounds & jobs
that is more than the night of my mind.
In the light of my mind, if the doctors looked, they would see
the cruelty even they inflict on me
when their rigorous analysis dismisses my humanity
as I try to explain how I came to be the way

I AM, THE SUM OF
a neglect that persists, that goes unnoticed
except in the mysterious forest of my brain, dark even in
their daylight, dark even when I try to explain the light of what

I AM. THE SUM OF
my responses seems irrational outside the context
of my mysterious forest where none venture to enter
except pills that numb my flora, dumb my fauna

(no stanza break)
& slow the growth that comes of my thoughts' speed.

I AM THE SUM OF
experiences of a world outside their

jerks

experience

but they insist the world I live in doesn't exist

except as my mind's mysterious forest
even though I show them that what I've grown
on paper alone
could blossom
in a world that gave my word light.

I AM THE SUM OF
their darkness, though I admit that some of my darkness
shadows it too. Too many times I've tripped
over my own roots in the mysterious forest, foraging
for food buried too deep to find
though my tingling tells me it's there
not far from where

I AM. THE SUM OF MY
senses tell me what only wolves should know
though I learned then & even now
in the mysterious forest of the laboratory
how quickly I can leap, how sharply I can see
how easily I can perform the complexity of the tasks
they assign me to test the balance of the hemispheres of my cerebrum
& even answer questions in a tone of civility
if unprovoked.

I AM THE SUM OF MY SENSES
tingling, supercharged, capable of sudden speed
toward directions I sometimes cannot see
in the mysterious forest by night or by day.

(no stanza break)

When they dismiss my experience
so vital to understanding those cubs of others' breeding
(by rejection, isolation & finally choice I have none)
I react with the full force of contradictory urges stimulated equally,
of affection like a cat surging to unpredictable hostility
from purrs to claws with no apparent cause
but the fertilizer that feeds the mysterious forest that

I AM. THE SUM OF MY SYMPTOMS
suggests disorder, the chaos of contradictions clashing
at the borders of consciousness. But there is a unity

there, the verge where the conflicts merge
into perception, even comfort, despite

jerks

the tics of the mysterious forest
hinting fear, hinting terror, hinting
to anyone there watching me that

I AM THE SUM OF MY SYMPTOMS

**“...the missing link between Civilized
Man and his primitive predecessors...”**

(Enter Dr. Wolf)

“There, there, now. Let us help you.

(no stanza break)

We have a plan that offers you coordinated
medical care. Our staff is familiar with
the medications that will alleviate
your symptoms

though there are some side effects,
mostly benign. We can assure you

clonidine”

“Why do I feel so slow, so sluggish, so....what
goes through one ear goes out the other with-
out my know...so stupid & I’m going to faint”

“Your blood pressure just got a little low, so why don’t we try a little”

“Tenderness?”

“No, Prozac.”

“Oh, wow! This is great!
Everything’s so sharp & bright
even the night shines.
This is better than soma
in *Brave New World*. I feel so
great but...but, down there, my, my...
my dick feels like a dead eel!”

“We still have

haldol.”

“NO! I WON’T LET YOU
POISON ME, MAKE ME AFRAID
TO ENTER YOUR MYSTERIOUS FOREST.
I DON’T WANT TO GROW FAT & SLOW.
I DON’T WANT TO GO THERE,
TO BE THAT WAY OR STAY HERE
TOO DULL TO SEE THE LIGHT
IN MY DARKNESS. I DON’T WANT
(no stanza break)
PSYCHOTIC’S ANESTHESIA.
I DON’T WANT TARDIVE DYSKINESIA.”

“LET US HELP YOU”

there he was
snarling,
edging for the open
door
before they could reach

he was there
mind
snarling, edging the door
open
before they could reach

HIM / IT

(Headlines of the Mind--Late Edition)

WILD MAN ABANDONS DOCTORS FOR WOLVES

&/or

BOY LOCKED UP 42 YEARS RETURNS TO BASEMENT

(In the Mysterious Forest)

Some symptoms.
Some, sum.

Sum symptoms.
Sum, sun.

SUN!

aaaaoooooo

SUN!

“Let us help---”

HELP / NO

HELL /NO

NO HELP / NO HELL

What if---?

SUN!

“Let us help---”

RUN!

RUN!

jerks

SUN!

AAAAA OOOOOO!