

Quiz

Not (a) the neighbours crouching dogs, but (a) clouds
 (b) the gatehouse spinster's hissing cats, (b) planes
 (c) the flock of simili-eponymous budgies, (c) butterflies
 (d) the eating-disordered hammy-hamsters, (d) stars

I've taken to naming after my (a) loves,
 (b) failures,
 (c) suspicions,
 (d) secrets,

always on the lookout for three together, (a) slouching
 (b) drifting
 (c) shooting
 (d) hitch-hiking past

like Magi on the move, calling out for names.

Today, some usual suspects:

- (a) sex : food : wine
 (b) the wife : foie gras poêlé : Montbazillac
 (c) Mathilde B. : jambon de Bayonne : Pécharmant
 (d) Laure de Noves : olives niçoises : Châteauneuf-du-Pape
- dangerously
- but deliciously shape-shifty as ever, the day not yet strapped on, not
- a lick of (a) Ishiguro
 (b) Celan
 (c) Chomsky
 (d) Vendler
- yet read, pre
- (a) -stretch
 (b) -coffee (all sighs and burbles in the kitchen)
 (c) -run around the block,
 (d) -meditatively

- in mid-stoop for the folded
- (a) *Northern Standard*
 (b) *Sassy*
 (c) *LRB*
 (d) *Equipe*

- tossed at the driveway's foot and mouth, in too-big slippers and a quick wrap of a (a) sari,
 (b) tutu,
 (c) kerchief,
 (d) great coat,

given way for a rent of sky caught	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) upsidedown (b) rightsideup (c) roundabout (d) arseways 	
backlighting my petite pendant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) relay stick (b) bird-in-nest (c) poster-child (d) rubberducky 	of
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) death, (b) life, (c) grief, (d) delight, 	such things

Blame

If Venus de Milo had been ridden happily home from school
 on the carrier, her grip loose on the saddle's big springs, sandals
 well clear of the spokes,
 and not on the bar, sitting arseways, arms
 at full stretch, reaching round for the chrome inside the
 callipers, she'd still
 have her arms and not nearly such a serious scoliosis.

Chansonette

In Oppidum,
 I live, a bum,
 hair and clothes in tatters,

my home a tomb,
 you might assume
 I'm weary of chit-chatters.

But I'm post- that
 New Age, old hat,
 that addles idler squatters;

with Opium
 to help me strum
 this song the Mistral scatters,

I ask what sum
 the tedium
 mulling lofty matters?

Oppède-le-Vieux, July 2000