

Aftermath

PETER MIDDLETON was born in 1950 and grew up in both England and the United States. After a first degree at Oxford University, he took a PhD at Sheffield University, and studied for a year at SUNY Buffalo. He is the author of a book on masculinity, *The Inward Gaze* (1992) and (with Tim Woods) *Literatures of Memory: History, Time and Space in Postwar Writing* (2000). A book of essays on performance, readership, and consumption in contemporary poetry is forthcoming. His poetry and essays have appeared in magazines in the UK and US, and he is an editor of Torque Press. After lecturing at several universities and polytechnics, he is now a Reader in English at the university in Southampton, England, where he lives with his partner Kate, and children George and Harriet.

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PETER MIDDLETON



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This book is dedicated to Kate, George, and Harriet.

Contents

Equations

First Thought	3
Here Is A Clue	4
Spare Explanations	5
Many People Do Not Like The Idea That Time Has A Beginning	12
To the Lifeworld	13
Forefathers	14
Romantic Gallery	15
Theory 2	16
Against Interpretation	17
Divided by a Common Language	18
City Life	23
A Bomb's Eye View	24

Tell Me About It

The Poetics Of Labour	27
Put Yourself In Their Place	28
Another Dispatch	29
Escapist Western	30
Here We Report	31
Fire Works	32
Poetry For Dummies	33
Finding A Voice	34
In the Mottram Archive	35
I Left A Little Of Myself Behind In That Novel	36
Such Theory Looks Like Advocacy	37
The Unsayable	38
Blaming The Sixties	39
New Human Abstract	40

One	41
The West In Pictures	42
Deep Time	43
Cognitive Mapping	44
Sing Me	45
Believe It Or Not	46
Predictive Curves	47
A Sonnet And A Half For Ted Berrigan	48
It's A Crime	49
It Is All Our Story	50
Front Line Epic	51
The Trouble With Metaphors	52
Eat Sleep Work	53
Based On The Classic Novel	54
Pump-Priming The Economy	55
After The DNA Code Was Broken	56
Persuasion	57
The Eagle Book Of Imperial Poetry	58
That Turner Prize Bed	59
Some Syllables Are Missing in this Elegy	60
The Personal Poem	61
Time Team	62
Cinematics Of Memory	63
Paternalisms	
1.	67
2.	69
3.	71
4.	73
5.	75

6.	77
7.	79
8.	81
9.	83
10.	85

Next Gen

1/Civil society	89
2/Lyric moments	90
3/Political subjects	91
4/Drives	92
5/The new anthropology	93
6/They bring us words for our poetry	94
7/Beyond Vision	95
8/Dogs, Dragons and Tygers	96
9/Online enchantments	97
10/The Sonnet	98
11/Poet and critic	99
12/The body	100

Expressions

Californium 98	105
Mendelevium 101	106
Fall Out Shelter	108
Up Above the Moral World	109
High-Heel Boots	111
Charles Olson	113
Intravention	114
I Feel Your Pain	116

Topologies	
Portrait Of An Unknown Man	119
Sacred Object Purpose Unknown	147
A Dialogue on Anachronism	162
<i>Afterword</i>	171
<i>Notes</i>	173

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Equations

First Thought

The forest wakes me it is an im
age of all tree
above aside and catching my walk
but then a wide grass track
is how to wake
waiting
hoper
owning up to no unthought
image engine
a forest without wakers
sentenceless
riser
the pointing word needs over there's branching
arbitrary tree
morning orders us to
cut
and will they take the middle way
the forest wonders
manning
am
soil water and leaflight green
and then not green
greying to rough
elevated
mage
no elevated is not the word
elevation insists the wood
climb or be blind say the birds of the image
to the wakers the woken the wakeman the

Here Is A Clue

Engined metaphysics blow the other
away, as in beyond the outskirts
of London, even beyond the tube.

I am not only the need of the other
but off-world and dangerously
unsyntaxed before planetfall,

and time over distance is domination
in any machine-made article of
faith, the star-traveller's hull

a way of being in and different
from space, the outward sign
of thought's absence from the shelves

in the hypermarket. A lifetimed
journey to the core of the text's
radioactive hypothesis: the universe

is made of words and those limited
elements are fixed until they shoot
particles, decay, and can be measured

not yonder, but on the prior out
esculent in roots but eschatological
at night, the sphere the author of genesis

wrote in to the usual sacred papers
an unrecognisable language. The feeling
is simple but semantic delay inevitable.

Spare Explanations

1.

Seeing as how the extramental
crumples into those flying buttresses
with a dioptric fuss, any reason
had better be good, if meant.

The spice is smoothing its sides
out of ogive against infra-red
warning instructions to channel flick
approaches to the highest.

Maybe, just maybe, is the defense
negotiator, light enough to soar
past the vector loaded supports bill
up and spectacular. This is society.

2.

This likening of evolutionary algorithms
to a chance at government, Kebles
any retrospective purse. You are my other
and could hit any of those words true.

Isn't is not a word in my vocabulary.
Once stated twice here, where here
might be anywhere, but always folds
the note. Creep. Solitude is rife.

The mind, an event, as if these two
possibilities were married but not to each
other's sex. Work that one out.
Real time reproduces well, false better.

3.

Survival of the genetic transport
is easy with all these wrecks
editing out the competition. Almost
a tree of destiny & not random

paintings of pigment crazed with day:
that colour too deep to be chosen
or told, which fades out into the infinity
of explanation. Well almost told.

It is so hard to stand and see it
without mentally saying fir and oak
silhouette. Standing is what it's
all about this nearly blue light.

4.

Inside the matchbox was a library of fortunate records.
Each book opened at the same page. It said
"I am the only survivor". All the rest
now bits of something else. Most of what was thought

isn't here any more. Inside the voice was a timbre
whose emotional colouring repeats in memory for ages
but you can't say what it is. There is no inner
voice. The match exploded and phosphates lit his chin.

He was not burnt. Inside his escape from harm
a child ran trustingly into the floor and cried.
The inside of what is commonly said is larger
than libraries. Bits of else open at the explosion.

5.

Husband encouragement and estimate
die Zeit, signal from my as my
or man city more the twenty nearest
your offshore air so close to oil and life

my weight is down. Recently I have taken
up talking father to father. There are heats,
money changes everything.
The long silences are interesting but pain.

What is underneath here? Do you remember
the act of beginning the process that would end
in its recall? Without point the pencil
still writes. An is between fathers.

6.

Father's eye is large and heard
as ego-I. Father's head is empire
large, or Rushmore hard, father's
word is langue. Men train in the caves

of his chest, and his heart pumps
gravity. Blinking they see TV
lights as they emerge, tanks
face them, they cry staccato bursts.

Father's imago is dead and hairy.
Each hair is checked for signs of life.
One is grass, the next is grass, the next?
Here the scene breaks off abruptly.

7.

Keeping long stations with simplest
daily self attention, hair recalls
the oldest acts of sacrifice, teeth
whiten under the brush of transubstantiation.

Isn't this ritual crush exciting, or is
my hearing clunker mild? Are cats
predestined familiars of banned affection,
or is sitting on the stain angelic?

I really don't think you can use
this imagined tone of meeting
any more. Great leaders flush
with expertise. Say this after me.

8.

Right out of a disaster made
of fire and brush, colored points
line up on the unnumbered plains
with a timepiece's absence noted.

Left to itself the new time is
written over with fallen skies,
bad infinities, sets of red night sun
propose outgoing streaks & worlds,

the way exhibitions stand you
on your own two feet, gawping
as the bits of larger refuse
to be rejoined, on this plane anyway.