

Rivington Arms

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Put It In Your Mouth / I'll see you on the dark side of the prune
curated by Darren Bader

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- I. “[Democritus says]: Salty flavor is constituted by large shapes which are not rounded... they are not round because what is salty is rough while what is rounded is smooth. They are not scalene because they are not entangled with one another – that is why what is salty is friable.” –Theophrastus, *On the Senses*

II. *July 16*

My second day back in Rome. The morning was spent explaining my difficulties with “Iphigenia” to a remarkable bust of Vespasian. I am duly convinced this prodigiously generous visage, although made of stone, far surpassed the mental acumen of the deplorable intellect that bears the name Mengs. This afternoon, I found myself remaining in great spirits around my discovery of the rare geode at Herculaneum. In my enthusiasm I thought it appropriate to bring this geode to Mengs. I requested that he paint a small portrait of the geode. But he protested vehemently, remarking that, “rocks are not to be received in portraits, dear Johann. They are a subject for the still life. You are well aware of this, I should think.” I could not help but respond hostilely, “Yes, I am aware of this, my good friend, but I cannot but consider this rock, as you so callously call it, a redoubtable thing of tantamount value to a work by the Della Robbias, or Ghirlandaio.” Mengs, like a redoubtable Philistine, could not hold back a mirthful ejaculation amounting to something like, “fuck off, cunt.” “Please reconsider the place of portraiture,” I gathered enough aplomb to retort. “First you request a portrait of Ossian, and now a rock,” he said. [...] Why are there no great painters of my time?

–pseudo-Goethe, Viaggio In Italia

III.

Dearest Hollis,

This vacationing, or temporary residency rather, has been therapeutic thus far. I count the three weeks, and then on to the four. I am really quite sanguine. I will visit you downtown soon, as I promised. Soon I

think.

There is something that I know you'll be receptive to (or at least I hope you will, and won't find me of an inferior intellect): the possibility of a revised definition of the word 'cipher.' Basically, I found myself in the midst of washing dog poop from the sole of my shoe in the kitchen sink the other day (a nice steel basin that helped enhance the moments that ensued). And I began to stare at the shoe and think of it as unique and dear, something I could love very much. The color and the texture; and I was marveling in the allure of the shoe. And then I thought of how the Mesopotamian cultures of however many BC (I am poor with dates ever since I frightened myself into believing I'd lost my aptitude for history –foolish creature I am), how these Mesopotamian peoples used to feed their god statues, as if the statues were able to animate and masticate, etc, and used to wash out the statues' mouths on certain occasions...and then back to the shoe and its leather; and I thought of washing lettuces and chards and I thought of the statues, or idols if you will, again and then I looked at the dish soap. And it was lemon dish soap and I thought of your wonderful lemon film. Genevieve showed it to me while you were away. I could kiss you I love that film so much. Wait, that's it, I'm going to get in a cab right now and come and give you a kiss. Hopefully you're back from Hamburg. Danny said you are. Enough of this letter. Love, K

Dear Kate,

Sorry to have missed you while you were in New York. Danny should have known that I was spending the month in Florida. Yeah, Lemon is something I like quite a lot. Originally, it was supposed to be Pastry, and then Yam (or Sweet Potato really, but Yam is a better word). It all became about the lemon peel though. Those are a lot thicker than you remember them to be. Molly says hi, by the way. In any case, I wish I'd gotten some time to see you. I miss you sometimes, which is a lot for me –you know I'm not good at missing. Maybe we can go riding when you're in town next, or at least talk about it. I miss horses. Something I can't help but miss. (I never mentioned how good it was to see you in Lion in the Winter. You know how picky I am, and still I was mesmerized.) Also, I've been reading your Erasmus for the first time: I can't help but being bored.

Yours,

Hollis

IV. On 5/5/05, Justin Rondeau <leroiesmort@gmail.com> wrote:

> >white broccoli

On 5/5/05, Darren Bader <duo.denim@gmail.com> wrote:

what's cauliflower?

On 5/5/05

[...]