

cf 12/18/74 pg A-1 Plan etc
 This poem rounds out
 (75) the epigraph seven years (Thyme) to greet
 sooner than expected, ??? C + me at
 Notes collected from 3rd abbd list #44 80
 beg. Sat Dec 17 (Paul here for pre-Xmas dinner) - f Dec 17/77
MND II ii 249 I know a bank where the wild thyme blows
 a wave's water does not cross the sea otherwise sailing would
 be impossible . . tidal's human <(tide)> life: moon's power twice the
 sun's. Sea-sand worm transferred into a tank rises
 from + sinks to sands twice a day as in the sea. Cf slang
 think-tank (think-box = brain, intellect) A child's
 graph (crayons <colors>) a) woods b) ~~rocks~~ ~~hard tilling~~ (tills rocks)
 use in c) (~~thoughts~~) ~~threshold~~ dances. Spider ~~pans~~ (verb) <moves ~~movies~~?> to the
 #-/? manor borne <flowered + change> ??? letters tubers
 #76-80 time (doctors) letters (mannie / many dined cat fishbones
 Cat one-green-one-blue eye timing dinner pitied from
 neighbor to neighbor. L cat = fēles (wild cat) Palladius
 4th c. AD catullus diminutive any animal (dog = <canis>)
 ean + root fe v. felix bearing young . . happy fortunate
 line 8 hinting at Bard College doctor of letters degree

Pencil draft b. Dec 17 (Sat) - f. Dec 20/77 (Tues)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 hope sevenyear fanned eyesac disrailing
- 6
- 7 moon's-flight twice sun's spider manor-borne
- 8

Ink draft Dec 20/77 (Tues)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 hope sevenyear fanned eyesac disrailing
- 6
- 7 moon's flight twice sun's spider manor-borne
- 8



* * *

Sources

Century Dictionary (CD), **cat, felicity, Felis**

Berrey & van den Bark, *The American Thesaurus of Slang*, **Brain (think-tank)** (135)

Shakespeare, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* II. ii. 249-252

King Lear IV. i. 54

Isaac D'Israeli, *Curiosities of Literature*, "Of Tea, Coffee, Chocolate"

Rachel Carson, *The Sea Around Us*

LZ personal notes and correspondence: Guy Davenport's cat, Bard College honorary degree, moon landing

Thyme

line 1: **Takes time where wild the**

line 2: **thyme blows poor tom's a**

line 3: **cold relentless-vest muffler jacket coat**

line 4: **one bluegreen eye ate his**

line 5: **hope sevenyear fanned eyesack disrailing**

line 6: **bird's-tread hie rose tree-budding fire**

line 7: **moon's flight twice sun's spider-manor-borne**

line 8: **litter letter words-justice thyme righting**

Dec 17-20/77

line 1: **Takes time where wild the**

See "Epigraph" to *80 Flowers*, line 1: Heart us invisibly thyme time

Shakespeare, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* II. ii. 249-252:

Oberon. I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopi'd with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine.

line 2: **thyme blows poor tom's a**

See Shakespeare line 1.

Shakespeare, *King Lear* IV. i. 54:

Edgar. Poor Tom's a-cold. [*Aside.*] I cannot daub it further.

line 3: **cold relentless-vest muffler jacket coat**

See Shakespeare line 2.

{This line is probably a self-reference as LZ was hypochondriacal about cold drafts.}

line 4: **one bluegreen eye ate his**

Guy Davenport letter to LZ dated 30 Nov. 1969: Speaking of Max, whom I've had for two years — Bonnie and I discovered the other evening that he is also the cat of some people on Bell Court (a block away), who have been wondering for two years who puts fresh flea collars on him and doctors his chronic bad ear (the result of a squirrel bite, it turns out). His name over there is Bunny. He is twelve years old, pushing thirteen. We were all amazed to uncover this very cat-like duplicity in the old cooter, who had the grace, I think, to be appalled to see his two families in the one room. He even has two vets, and apparently sups double daily, though he spends his nights here. Now I must check out the rumor which I paid no attention to at the time that the widow Montgomery down the street has a large white cat with one blue eye and one green whose name is Snowball. A triple identity would merit an article in the Journal of American Veterinarian Association, surely, with photographs of the Master Confidence Cat as Max, Bunny, and Snowball (HRC). {Copied into black notebook (68-69) > NBk page 4}.

eye ate his < hiatus

line 5: **hope sevenyear fanned eyesack disrailing**

{LZ's notes above indicate this refers to the fact that with this poem LZ has almost completed *80 Flowers*, seven years earlier than initially planned. "Thyme" was composed 19-20 Dec. 1977, so counting loosely he is seven years ahead of his 80th birthday in Jan. 1984. See opening line of "Epigraph" to *80 Flowers* line 1}.

eyesack disrailing < Isaac D'Israeli {see next}

line 6: **birds'-tread he rose tree-budding fire**

Isaac D'Israeli, "Of Tea, Coffee, Chocolate": The first frozen Norwegians on the first sight of roses, dared not touch what they conceived were trees budding with fire. {See "Epigraph" l. 2. Black notebook dated 11/13/69 > NBk (p. 1)}.

See "Epigraph" to *80 Flowers*, l. 2-3:

round rose bud fire downland

bird tread quagmire dry gill-over-the-ground (CSP 325)

line 7: **moon's flight twice sun's spider-manor-borne**

Rachel Carson, *The Sea Around Us*, "The Moving Tides": That the sun, with a mass 27 million times that of the moon, should have less influence over the tides than a small satellite of the earth is at first surprising, but in the mechanics of the universe, nearness counts for more than distant mass, and when all the mathematical calculations have been made we find that the moon's power over the tides is more than twice that of the sun (145).

{See LZ's notes above, copied/revised several times from an original note in the "A"-22 & -23 notebook: "11/12/71 Mariner 9 approaching Mars {above and below this note was later added:} 8/18/73 - spider manner <pan> ~~bird~~? born / in space ? without gravity stands to / reason uplifted / needs no suit stronger than human" > NBk: "9/17/74: spider pans to the manner <? borne / bone> ban" (p. 4) > NBk: "A child's graph: C's desk painting 73 - 7 Av NYC / a) woods b) rock, hard tilling / c) thought's threshold dances / spider pans (verb) to the (manor borne / manner born)?" (3rd abbreviated list of 80 Flowers under 44. Thyme)} {See LZ notes #79 "Yaupon" line 1}. 22/23 notebook??

line 8: **litter letter words-justice thyme righting**

{LZ notes above indicate reference to the conferral of an Honorary D.Litt. from Bard College in June 1977 (NBk page 1). The Latin version of the certificate reads: “ad gradum doctoris in litteris”; see #63 Oxalis and #74 Aloe}.

CD, **cat**¹, n. {...} It. *gatto*, m., *gatta* f., a cat; the oldest known forms being L., namely, LL. *catus* (*cātus* or *cātus*: *cātus* occurs in Palladius, about A.D. 350), m., L. *catta* (once in Martial), f., ML > *cattus*, m., *catta*, f., a cat (a domestic cat, as opposed to *felis*, prop. a wildcat: see *Felis*, a word found earlier in the dim. *catulus*, in common classical use in extended sense of ‘the young of an animal, a kitten, whelp, cub, pup,’ etc. (of a cat, lion, tiger, panther, wolf, bear, hog, and esp. of a dog, being regarded in this sense as a dim. of *canis*, a dog: see *Canis*. The original source of the name is unknown. {...}) > **Felis** [NL., < L. *felis*, more commonly *feles* (in Varro and Cicero *fælis* in the best manuscripts), a cat; also applied to a marten, ferret, polecat; prob. < **fe*, produce, bear young: see *felicity*, *fecund*, *fetus*.] The cats as a genus; the typical genus of the family *Felidæ* and subfamily *Felinæ*: {...}. > **felicity**, n. {...} {...} < L. *felicita(t)s*, happiness, < *felix* (*felic-*), happy lucky, fortunate, in earlier sense fruitful, fertile, productive, < √ **fe*, produce: see *fecund*, *fetus*.] 1. Happiness; bliss; blessedness; a blissful or happy state.