

Mutiple Strokes

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I

Tell me, will New York always remain new?
 With its streets leading to Abraham Lincoln
 And its grocery stores selling original Paris
 Behind an Irish Steinbeck?

By the way, where have they hidden
 The jazz stories of Manhattan
 With all this rap and hip-hop and sagging pants?

II

Is it the crook that is crooked
 Or crooked that is like a crook?
 Why do they say politicians & drug barons launder stained money overseas
 When the laundryman cannot find a single dollar
 When he searches and searches the breast pocket
 Before eyeing the washing machine?

III

What the hell is wrong with English
 That it con/fuses the world with its words & meanest meanings?
 Do boxers put their opponents in boxes,
 Or in a state where their brains
 Cannot whisper to their wishes?
 Why call a game a fight
 When you have a PhD in English
 And a necktie to hang all the errors gathering in your throat?

IV

Ok, if prayer is the act
 What do I call the person who prays?
 Where will the prayer warriors sharpen their spears,
 If what we have done is the same as what we have failed to do?
 And must that big-time preacher
 Always say A-men when he ministers to women?

V

And why are English teachers not always from England?
 That multicultural classroom thinks too much
 About the difference between where you are and what you are,
 Little wonder all the grammar books in this class smell of pizza and Nigerian suya.

When I spell a word, am I also under a spell?
 What the hell
 Is wrong with English
 That it says I shouldn't call a spade a spoon
 When they use the spade to feed the yawning earth at death o'clock?

VI

A live ammo does not live, it is only
Few vowels away from your slip of tongue
That's why my thanks sound like tanks
Conversing at the border between Georgia & Russia

When they exchange prisoners
Let them also exchange vodka & the patience
To read what their guns cannot write well

VII

And since a poem, they say, is not finished,
Why shouldn't I abandon this one
When I've already run out of ideas?