The Deconstructionist’s Compulsion

this is a poem

it is a poem about deconstruction

since this is a poem about deconstruction

it stands to reason that we must deconstruct something

this means we will take it apart

and consider the pieces

no, it doesn’t

the act of deconstruction is not destruction

when we dismantle a poem, the poem remains

it is not destroyed

deconstruction means

we can dismantle from within the structure

and use the tools we are given

or we can dismantle from without the structure

and use our own tools

no, it doesn’t

those are assumptions

we can dismantle a structure

with x-rays

leave it intact and respected

now we have performed

a limited act of deconstruction

do not pretend you know what i’m talking about

i wrote the above

and i do not pretend i know what i’m talking about

we call the above deconstruction

because it is the job of the deconstructionist

to dissect the metaphysics of a work or an idea

and thereby reveal the false binaries and assumptions

that lie at the heart of tradition

the false assumption here

is that we can ever state

in a poem

what the source of the poem is

in fact, deconstruction has come to mean more than this

it means the dismantling of the psychology

surrounding a work or an idea

so that we can see what makes it tick

in the act of deconstruction

is an act of reconstruction

that is, if we care that anybody hears us talk about it

why should we do this?

the answer is surprisingly simple

because it is fun

it satisfies the endless curiousity

that sets us apart from the rest of the monkeys

and allows us to build poems

better

bigger

smarter

and with more permanence

poems take up no room

we can never have too many

but when we have as many as we do

we must decide which ones

are worth teaching to our little monkeys

to do this

we must discuss the poems

we must dismantle the intangible

see what makes it tick

decide whether it is a leaky roof

or a sound foundation

and pass it on or not

this is a poem

it is a poem for you to deconstruct

and for you to decide the merits of

you will probably not pass it on to your little monkeys

but you will pass on the strings of the intangible

which it has poured through you

one way or another

good luck with that, monkey