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= = = = =

To know that I am free to be the day
and no off sparkled merely dappled light
do I have to shun along the way to other
but dare immerse in the immediate

one moment maybe endlessly overt.

Off-day in the forest of on.

So turn off the minimal, only things
usually go on too long, so what you say

slithers sideways to unclear the need
you felt to speak it to me sideways
sitting on the rustic rim of ordinary water
'never say what you mean' and I complied.

But that was back when dragons were
and priests green-kirtled skipped around the ash
she slipped right to me and passed on either side
an eerie feeling that I wasn't there at all

but here I am, safe from fairyland
modestly sunlit in prosperous April
the dint of heavy traffic just a memory
like Moscow or a phrase from Cicero.

Have you *ever* been here? I implore you
to study the classics: moss on xenoliths,
the glum geometry of shale, holly's edgy leaf,
glaciers, muddy paths and my cat's green eyes.

But I do not have a cat and that too is love.

3 April 2012

= = = = =

The wind says something.

Open the door.

You worry about your health
you should worry about mine—

I am all the world has
and all it needs.

Swallow me
as much as you can.

Then hear what I will make you say.

3 April 2012

= = = = =

As I sat wondering
how to get oxygen
into every body cell
without the path of killing
eating blood rivers
roiling through the quiet
body, some crows flew by,
How to get us into the sky
they asked, laughed at me
the way they do, all
you need is light and air,
one carries the other
into the secretest lair.
Light and air—try it,
stop eating and live.

3 April 2012

= = = = =

Grimy fascination
names one by one

the body parts.

I am elbow

again. Liberty
means doing everything

you can do.

Ability is permission.

The cloud rains
the earth drinks in.

In other words life
is a disease of matter

elsewise would be at ease.

Peace. But then

the sparrows came
and we soon followed.

4 April 2012

Call this a beginning

an opera built of birds
and a saint asleep
dreaming of a piece of bread

what do you dream of
in what part of whose body
what did you drink for breakfast
before tea and coffee

what was the world
like then and to whom
how could we have lived
without a piece of bread

without saints and birds
without opera and buses
and the plinth in the square
void of statues

I was your only hero
and you exiled me
into suburban gardens
talking to birds

dreaming only of you.

4 April 2012

= = = = =

Once there was a Christian
held a candle in the wind
until the light went out

this is called heaven
where there is nothing
but numbers and the names

of colors in other
languages, some of them
have no word for you.

4 April 2012

= = = = =

Thousands of years
or are they hours
on the prow of this ship
gouging a groove
in the water element
this way, to get here,
am i here yet, have all
the awkward hours
added up to the grace
of an empty shore, rocks
plenty, and way up
half hiding in mist
the flush of wild roses
also waiting to be here?

The wise man insisted
once that Love also
was a native of these rocks.
And I still don't understand.

4 April 2012

DEALING WITH THE MAUNDY

The mind at once't
with itself the first
time is forever.

All the water is
out of the well
and poured out
round us as another

(we are molecules
of each other—*corpus*
mysticum Christi—
betrayed today—the door
is always open
but the doorway's in shadow—)

(the suspension of words
is part of the inside you)
(like a bridge you carry with you
—cardoor slam the song
of morning—or a hand)

the point is the actual is evidence enough
(when I saw the three-day-dead body of my friend
there must be something that is not this—

someone merely absent—on his own
occasion elsewhere arising—the nonsense
that makes sense)

so watch
everything think nothing.

5 April 2012

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She breathed a virgin air
 (leather holds wood to the wall)
 back of your mind a tune you dare sing
 (wrapping objects was fashionable
 art in those days—she unwrapped it
 she split the wood and found the floor
 she stood upright and shouted down the night
 she split the stick) a nail is near
 (inefficient geometry of living
 systems death is a mathematical mistake)
 (no dogs allowed) she kissed the wall
 rub against the wall the wall
 knows all (she was listening)
 (I am my own father I have no mother)
 that is how she knew it was different from her
 and she could work with it
 (I am different from wood but not very different
 we feel different things
pain is not part of the process)
 she could nail it together
 (love you for your lumber) remember
 radio remember when we had to see
 with our ears (you can do it) (you are sound
 yourself) (you ate the air) dark
 in the dark (dark feel of meaning)

bright fingertips of wood (*cantus rerum*
the song of things) listen (and then
she slapped the leather on her wood
and nailed the light to the other side of color
and the wall laughed (the wall
is always laughing listen if you don't believe)

she broke a flower and found a friend
(always too busy to say more)
(clarity is frightening sometimes)
identity usually hurts
(when never then ever)
in Hawaii they have no vacations
(all this is just a framework for it)
(inside the parentheses really outside)
(agile as a monkey) we were once
(remember when you!) move faster than wood.

5 April 2012

= = = = =

It does not speak
to say desire
but to listen.

Claudia in a cloud
her sweater taut
the neck unwashed

and broadloom everywhere.
I could have been a madman
but had the wrong metabolism

some people are just stuck
with being sane
so she rattled on in Italian

on her cellphone and I
was helpless in admiration
her body and her mind

so tightly taut together
it was like watching a river
or a rock rolling downhill

she *was* the world and let me watch

so desire has no part in this

the mind just pays attention

to what is so simply there.

5 April 2012

=====

Be natural...

—R.C.

Wave your fingers
and be the sun
love me if you can
if you can love me
you can love everyone

the trees thanks to you
are stirring with
what will be color
now still just
a mistiness
around their lips

shine up at them
while the sun shines down
we'll make a world
of this before we're done.

6 April 2012

= = = =

A word with no meaning spits in God's face.

It is Good Friday and we deem
ourselves lordly of language. But kneel
at the foot of the word, the word
dies into you and gives you life.

Do not mock the word
crucified for you in human speech.

It has to happen, the word
is spoken for you, it speaks
to set us free from the dismal
tomb of the unspoken, the mere
yearning, the sullen fear.

The word steps out of the tomb.

Adore the literal,
cling to the hem of its robe
and be taken to heaven,
this place, this lasting answer.

6 April 2012

= = = = =

I'm your shut-in pen-pal
a century ago the radio
was made for such as us
I am your pen sometimes
and sometimes you are my
pal or even my lap or even
the open door that shuts me in
you open up again and let me
really in, you are my pen,
I write into your lap, we pal
around in cyberspace and never
meet except the way the sun
and the moon meet, constantly
and never, crossings,
crossings, wedding at a distance,
scald of moonlight, ice of the sun.

6 April 2012

GETTING THERE

for Michael Ives

Whom had I followed
or would have seen
a mustang prancing in Montana
a meadow I never?

No one will ever get there
the kodachrome flowers
are old as magazines
the books we read

full of the truth
time turns into lies
and the shattered grammar
of the middle class

we scoop the dust of
the sanguine dirt
to heap a little mound up
a man could stand on

to see six inches further
over that unspeakable prairie
runs from Vienna to the Ohio
with only a stupid ocean in between

in friendship see you
standing there at last
the dream place dimly
the flowers that smell like cigars

or what is the geometry
of that geography
how much further does
the eye reach

over the ultimately flat
puszta savannah steppes
noetic grasslands of America
how many miles ahead

for each inch of elevation
we are preposterous
because we love so much
and hope so hard

the orchestra is broken
only the uplifted hand
can fix it by falling
as we by failing

write the new history of this world.

4/6 April 2012

GOOD FRIDAY 2012

To relieve the grief of the day
the Other Music happens

a star broken on an anvil
and the great cold devil spits on the steel

the carbon turns into diamond
you know how it does

you know about these things
they happen under her skirt

and the cross to begin with is wood.

2. I asked you to study the lines in wood
to see if any of them led to me

whoever I am
in this particular story

more like no one
an absence that loves you

from far away and with very cold hands.

6 April 2012