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**aprC2011**

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Try with the whelk  
lift anything at all  
from its shell  
to find

the underside  
the unnatural—

these are my credentials  
imprimatur the sun  
sets on you when you turn away

*a tergo*

                  approach  
everything from behind,  
as you must do with words,  
those deer at gaze in forest glades,  
sneak up on them  
circling in from the rear

and the miners sing beneath the ground  
still guessing there is something there  
wants to come out

                  into our hands  
or why would Earth let

such toiling robbers in?

Civilization means taking nature by surprise,  
'country' is from *contra naturam*—

meantime through black storm  
clouds green waters  
friends come home.

8 April 2011

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It is not easy to come again  
to the stone you deciphered when you were young  
and stare now at the inscription again, dumb  
almost until the shapes begin  
by themselves to wriggle towards meaning.

But are they the same meanings you once knew  
and carried back from Persia in your skill-set  
and used to conquer whatever it is you rule now  
to this day never doubting where it came from  
or how you came to be there when it spoke.

8 April 2011

=====

How much is left of the old permissions?

This burin's meant for copper  
not for zinc. Though the meek  
angel of the obvious lets you  
use it to stir your milk tea too—  
England, mother, I am home!

8 April 2011

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Please, at least to answer  
where the hard rock candy  
dissolves in the whisky jar  
and we are near at last  
the center of the earth, *cor  
mundi*, where the clouds  
are breathed out as words  
we take so long to learn  
to read. The wind spells them  
past us, the sugar slowly solves  
the toxicity of alcohol we hope.  
A medicine. A lie the body  
tells itself about the world  
around it, about itself. No  
chance for truth, that parakeet  
we build so many cages for.  
Rock & Rye my father called it,  
took one spoon against the cold.  
Mostly it sat in the china closet  
fascinating to watch the crystals  
slowly ungrow. For a child.  
Later I saw sadder things by far.

8 April 2011

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A day when everybody's elsewhere  
is a species of flower, believe me,  
thornless, a viscid glimmer in the cup  
to draw the beetip of my tongue  
to taste. Taste this emptiness,  
the healingest, the holy. Quiet  
as an animal alert. The day so quick  
to understand me. What can I do for  
you, dear post-adolescent afternoon?  
Marry me and we'll live alone.

8 April 2011

## THE OTHER THING

And from the bottom of the word  
something's left after meaning flies  
into the ears of the hearer,

a sound

maybe, what the alchemists called *fæces*  
or *caput mortuum*, one skull  
from all the ever dead.

Since every word depends on all the other  
words in its language for its edge,  
pint, swath, cut, penetration.

And then this other thing is left  
outside of language, before or after it,  
shadow of sound, ash of wish.

8 April 2011



= = = = =



*[heron in my pond]*

But is it mine?

Isn't it?

Isn't whatever is given

to see

given also to be?

Is the green cut out of the white or the white cut out of the green?

Where does the bird stand?

Did my heron just come down and land in your pond?

Such a splash I made

it tore the woods apart and let the white light in—

the light we hardly ever see, the light of perfect symmetry

the kind the teachers rattled on about in psych class,

gestalt, flimmerwirkung, filling up the field,

a man's heart breaking at the sight of a heron

standing in the little stream across the street from his house

where the stream bends and begins its long fall to the river  
and the quiet heron stands at nightfall

pondering green on white or white on green.

And what can a man do with his heart,  
is the heart a heron? and where can it land?  
can it be safe anywhere?

A score or more of green leaf radians reach out  
from where the calm bird looks the other way.

We know how to get the answer,  
we watch the knife marks, see the green world cut away  
to let the other world come in and burst out at the same time.

I step across the little street  
and wander on the grass  
I step into your pond.  
I say something, I speak bird and you speak forest,  
we impersonate the actual  
because the actual has no words but ours,

we tell our lies to link the world together,  
it all is a kind of seducing  
seducing things to keep going on,  
keep them coming down into your pool and lingering.

Everything we say is just lingering

because we want to be close to one another,  
so close, close as the bird to the sky or the bird to the pond

and we have the words for everything but that.

8 April 2011

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From the beginning a blue light—  
there, a mark on canvas  
enough to start with,

make it, see it, move on.  
Or lenticular image  
I grow old as you speak.

Everything is boring  
when you want something else.  
Remedy: Want *this* thing.

Who are you to tell me  
to want anything?  
Doesn't all our misery begin with wanting?

And want means 'lack, scarcity, deprivation,'  
so peasants 'lived in want'—  
do you want that for me?

Already this 'this' you spoke of  
is long gone, the shape  
of a day turns inside out—

you should know a day is pure topology  
the same surface bends  
a different way for everyone

and there is nothing to it but surface  
and surfaces go on forever—  
that's why beauty makes us sad.

9 April 2011

= = = = =

Lift up the natural  
that's what we need  
the sleek necessity  
of spring weather

blue flowers  
all over our mind  
like the small bruises  
left on her hip

where Hades grabbed her  
as he brought her home  
where she belongs  
the light of her

from which of course  
she speaks again  
now hellebore,  
now Siberian squills.

9 April 2011

= = = = =

Ask me to be nothing need.

An orange alphabet, a book of seed.

Care for me, the lioness sleeps beneath hawthorns  
annoyed by dreams of having to pursue.

To live in a body made for killing  
and be beautiful—how hard everyday life is.

The seeds when planted grow with vigor  
but the flowers come up somewhere else

another country where their colors  
fickly toy with the local light—

and that too has to be beautiful,  
the countrymen have to respect it

deeply, but deeper still they wonder  
(wrongly, I think) whether even light can kill.

9 April 2011

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*[she wanted out]*

But that is what it's all about  
the fleeing into nakedness  
as if the only Out there is  
is what we are to start with

bare, colorless, full of wanting,  
ready to tear the world apart to get it,  
what, it's not easy to know.  
But it's there, on the other side of the usual,

the other side of our clothing  
is the inside. The artist undresses the picture.  
You find an image and strip it bare.  
Then what, what do you do

with a white stone maiden with big breasts  
who comes hurtling past you



trying to get out? You try to hold her  
but it's time for everybody to go home,

even that stone suchness comes apart,  
the eye cuts through the world  
and everything seen turns out to be  
just a veil you want to rip open

and you do. Each one of us on earth  
is married to some invisible beauty  
we tear the world apart to see—isn't  
that what your little scalpel says?

9 April 2011

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You wonder how I knew  
what you used to do?

Your body told me all of it  
not just the skin the skin is the doorbell  
is the message slipped under the door  
the skin is the sunlight dappling the pale  
wood of the door in the shadows  
of all the trees of days around you,

the skin is message and messenger  
the skin remembers but the body tells more  
and it isn't even the body you walk around in  
or that a friend can touch or even hold  
the body is something beyond the body  
as the body is something beyond its shadow  
so there is a body of which the body is just shade

and that body walks away from you anytime it pleases  
and does what it wants in night and vision  
and one fine day it came to me like a verse in the Bible  
and told me what you used to do.

But only you can tell me if you do it still.

9 April 2011

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Rage to know—  
that's what looks  
from the worm's eye

*Wollust war dem Wurm gegeben*

not lust and certainly  
not wantonness  
but the yearning to know  
the other,  
the one seen.

(9 April 2011)

## IN SAMOTHRACE

Close to the future  
the seed falls  
everything ready  
even the sky aligned  
for such mysteries—

the three hooded men on the island  
only their eyes can you see

one lives in your spine one in your spleen  
one in the little turret on top of your head

the three hooded men  
are really girls  
you've known all your life  
because you have always been this island

and their eyes you find so sly mysterious  
beautiful even in amber and seagreen and blue  
their eyes are you.

Now pauseth Priest to snatch a breath  
he tells what he knows  
plus what he's been told

his whole life cunning in the mysteries

scant repose and strawberries

goats milk and black pepper

who needs god

when we have mysteries

the three hooded men

deep-carved into the island

the three hooded thousand year old men

who are actually girls

or eyes or your fragments of memory,

how could a girl grow old

(sometimes your mother is younger than you are)?

but Time is mere distraction to Priest,

Priest dwells in always almost

everything is ready already

and the three hooded figures of Samothrace

giggle inside their hoods

hidden inside him where he can't reach them.

the Muses of Matter are mighty babes

they stay young while all the arts get tired

because they are not made!  
pure soft sensuous illusion from end to end!

Priest thinks he can touch them.  
Instead of touching them.

10 April 2011