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So that's what all the music was for!
To get there and get beyond
alone or together makes no difference
the night is only a hotel, the day
is only a shiny new car, you
go as far as the word is with you.

5 November 2010

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The hand is a miracle
time made out of a few bones
while angels supervised
chanting instructions in Old Winglish.

5 November 2010

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The alternative is never obvious.
So lift up the stone,
dislodge the toad,
raise the leaf he was sitting on,
turn it over and read the secret word
Masons have been looking for all these years.
Pronounce it. Rise
into the sky—the experiment is complete.

5 November 2010

[End of NB 330]

SONATA FOR UNACCOMPANIED VIOLA

1.

Rapture of when the hand finds it
the sweet spot on the trunk
where the sap seeps through. Then
you are Lord of Winter calling
time to spring into your fingers.
Mouth. Everything is maple here.
It comes again and again,
crazed with colors it persists
and persists. Everything at all
wants to be sky—
that big, that changeable,
always here because so firmly there.

2.

Stand there laughing
smart as a crow
beginning to suspect
that all stories
are the same story.

3.

What else is there but going and getting,
having and losing? Only the names
change. Names also are the sky.
If you're really smart, you'll lick
the say wherever it springs,
taste and never tell.
Leave it for the crows to say it to the sky.

6 November 2010

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Try that ruby-glistening streak of light—
is it a stem, is it a gap
between cloudbank and horizon
when the sun is deciding which way to go?

Is it more than you can handle?
Sweet Lord, you thought, is it a blade
soaked with some childbirth beyond the world?
Are we the rich dense crumbling afterbirth?

Where does this crisp autumn air
go to get itself and clean? It loves us
so knowingly, immense relief of gold leaves
after the birds fall silent.

6 November 2010

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Never force it. Always hydrangea
to black-eyed susan to rose of Sharon
to resurrection oak leaves on the ground.

It takes care of itself and you—
let it. Your business is to notice
yourself noticing these things. And be kind.

6 November 2010

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Count the whitecaps
divide by three.
You know my number.
It will work
as long as the sea.

6 November 2010

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I'm trying to get started again. Confession.
And the fairies who bring flowers to the table
—tiger-tawny dahlias, meek
chrysanthemums—are autumn animates,
hidden hallelujahs in the swirl of leaves.
Yes, I believe! I believe in everything.
Everything with a name is real
and everything not yet. They're all around us,
they swoon around my house in summer
and czardas now in wild November.
A flower! Or a candle flame! Or two crows!

6 November 2010

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See how loud time is?

A branch falls on the lawn.

We all know what it means:

a stick, a stalk, a caveman's
cudgel, a crucifix.

It falls and we know.

From one half-broken sound
our world takes off.

Clatter of hooves on stone courtyards,
groan of battle, fox yelps
cornered by baying hounds,
quaint tanks crush through the Ardennes woods,
Kuwait burns. Wood burns.

A branch falls on the bare picnic table,
the picnickers turn and stare at it
amazed from their meadow frisbeeing.
What is this sound? What city
do we have to build up from the ground
now? It is so wearying being in time.
Even our little dog is trying to bite the sky.

7 November 2010

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Will I ever have enough to be me?

What a stupid question—

nobody is me, nobody even yet

in all this world has enough to be me.

Me is the other side of the moon

and it is 512 B.C. We assume

something is there. Or who

lights the moon up most nights?

The sun. And who is on

the other side of him?

Maybe if I had eyes in the back of my head

I could get a glimpse of me sometimes

when me gets bored with my company and drifts away.

7 November 2010

ISTOPEIN

(Language is investigation
implicitly
language is history

when we name a thing
we locate it in space on time

when we say anything
we commit ourselves and are committed
to historical process

There has been said to be a country
where men and women can be silent
and thus outside of history
outside of time

But that's just someone saying so
and every saying is political
commits us to this time this place
this warped economy double-digit unemployment
the wars of sheer resentment
shrill identities who don't know who they are either,

suicide as self-assertion, murder as a language
at last that needs no translation)

7 November 2010

=====

Are we close enough to going with the Need?
Or not a question either. We are ink
in someone's pen—uh oh, what will we say now?

For saying in this world is doing in the next,
ha-Olam ha-ba, tomorrow, the minute after
now, the world to come.

7 November 2010

WET

Blustery morning, gusty,
lusty as a broken downspout
gushing full but I haul
nothing from dream.

Why's that? Who waylaid
me on the wakeway?
Stole all my meanings,
my rehearsals, my dream mes?

Hermes! The lord,
Feathered Forgetter,
who eases off your mind
the stuff you thought was you.

They call him Thief
but he steals only what you
wanted gone. Needed gone.
He led me through the gate and said:

Nothing you've seen is worth
recalling. What was good in there
(he pointed back into the dark)
has become you already

(here he pinched softly my upper
arm), the wind you hear
out there blows through you too
and you are clean at last.

8 November 2010

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Music needs
to say something else.
Something I can take home.
to whisper a friend's left ear,
something like a word
but much shorter
and makes more sense.

8 November 2010

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The flowers that waited for you
to come home are still here.

Satisfied with attention they soften
and grow old. A lily tilts

to the southeast, a leaf bedraggled
at the western window.

These things are important—
saying them is what language was born for,

to give us back what time
tries to take away. Takes

away. This world will last
as long as I can watch these flowers.

8 November 2010

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Have I been guilty
of dispersal?
If so, are seeds.

Who knows who finds.
Or when what words
written in air
decode themselves in crystal
or notes of music
and someone knows.
Someone, this is all for you.

8 November 2010

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Now we know what must be spoken:
wind in the bare trees, a spitting drizzle,
the day. The sapling fence quivers
at each gust, a healthy shiver
not worried yet. The meek
idolatry of weather hold me
willing captive in its temple. Our own sky.
We need answers, Wind, not rhetoric.
What is all this commotion about?
And then a voice from the other
side of my eyes answers: Any
answer is an annihilation.
Adore the meaningless, rarest of all things.

8 November 2010