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My own life (the only one I know in any detail) is interesting only insofar as inspecting its years, its phases of attraction and aversion, attachment and farewell, might reveal something about the way life in general is—the gears? or meshes? or circles? or cycles? that make us intersect with one another, and with the deeds suddenly possible that we do or leave untouched. What kind of Venn circles or histogram could reveal at last to a person the shape of what he happens?

24 November 2011

The color of a number is a clue.

Is not a color.

Is not a clue.

Why is 7 red? Because it is 1 come again?

1 is red and 9 is violet.

Below and above, and so it goes.

Until you tell me
(this is a love letter after all)
till you tell me
why the light in the deepest
heart of a diamond
is blue.

My mother's modest diamond ring
taught me all I know about
the mystery of a deep light
a light I have to follow.

About blue.

It seems to me I said it or it's been said before
"light decides."

I'm getting nostalgic for light—
not like a blind man
but like a man who sees a woman
across the border in another country,
a woman relaxing on her lawn
or filling with black oil seeds
feeders for pretty birds,
strange birds,
the kinds we don't have here.

I sit in shadow and watch the new sun
make its slow move across the public grass.

24 November 2011

I AM A VECTOR

The word *I* is a vector
it carries in its rat nature
the plague of meaning
out into the quiet of the world

such a simple vector
carrying the almost infinitely
adaptable micro-organisms of grammar

through a storm of sound and its shadow, writing.

24 November 2011

SORT OF A LETTER

Why are you far? Caught in the desert in a web of words, the all-night dope jabber than never reaches dawn? Your artful silences are a banker's fraud, he's got all the money and still wants mine. You have all the words I gave you. Or you gave me. And I can't stop talking. Is that what you want? And you say nothing. Spill the fucking beans, for Christ's sake, lift the window shade and let me see you do it. Wherever you are. Stop hiding in the moonlight. You hear that cry? That's me, I'm breaking in the back door, shoving my way in. I don't care who you're living with. Or I do, and I'll get even, but that's not the point now. Nothing makes me madder than silence. It makes me crazy. Tall Irish slut with fascist tendencies. Really, I hardly know you, even after all of it, but I have a right to be wrong. I'm being generous, I'm giving you all the explanations though you're not entitled to them. As a matter of fact I'm not entitled either. Neither of us knows much about the other, how could we? And what is there to be known? People are not that different, are they? Some are near and some are where you are. So what, so what, it's Thanksgiving and I'm glad you exist. Which is more than I can say about you. Or maybe you are. You sign your emails with x's and o's—x means you cross me out, o = zero = I mean nothing to you, or, since x stands next to o, I mean next to nothing to you. 0 = zero. I love you, everything gets confused in sunshine, smell of your clothes. Slapped you so hard there were bruises on the palm of my hand. I'm so delicate, really, but nobody knows. So thin, my skin.

Across the road two trees are growing. They started from one root or however that works. They started out touching and grew further and further apart. I hate looking at it. At them. Always further and further apart. Their branches still interweave a little high up but their bodies don't touch ever again. And when there

are leaves on them (there are no leaves) you can't tell the leaves of one from the leaves of the other. That's how I know you love me too, despite the shitty x's and o's, the breathless silences, the map we tore up to slay the distances, the wishing well that ran dry, the four-leafed poison ivy rarity we found growing by the stone, the late-night radio, the smell of gasoline.

I want to drink your word. There. Silence is a common thing, an Irish trick to win a shabby game, a profanation of the world's song. Silence is a con man's ploy, an art gallery's cunning, selling nothing for something. Come home to me while the euonymus still blazes in the hedge, don't let winter hurt me, you don't have to say anything smart, smart as you are. Just keep talking.

24 November 2011

THE GAME

Discover while you can—sequences
of interlinear affection—me on you—between
the languages of our separate desires—what this

weird meaning is—the buckboard in flames
and the prairie worried—artesian subtext—
the sweat where throat means chest—*einander*

one another means another—zeppelins
over the Bodensee—bottom of the world
lets us go flying—flying—you on me—

we're home now—no more weather—
we are interruptions of each other—
river of us as we are—game no one ever loses.

24 November 2011

= = = = =

A sign hoisted on a country road
God Sees Your Cigarette
a lady deer stands by it
waiting to cross—you drive slow
for her sake but this just makes
her wait longer—nothing
you do is exactly right,
smudges everywhere. How much
you can see when you're driving
if only you were looking.

25 November 2011

= = = = =

Of course we like things that work
that come out right
like crossword puzzles or Agatha Christie.
Our *kleinkunst* called Fiction
exists to simplify the world
or make its irreducible complexity
at least beautiful to contemplate
the way music charms our ordinary air.
We swoon so easy! Eager to
pass into rapture! Anywhere but here!

25 November 2011

= = = = =

Across the road
men having trouble
putting up a sign.
Mes semblables, mes frères!

25.XI.11

=====

Losing on the way to finding
that's what the bible's all about
I learned that from Charles Ives
and Ben Whorf helped out too.

25.XI.11

= = = = =

As if I could ever be other than American!
I'm more American than the Pope and the
Beatles and the pepperoni pizza all put together.

25.XI.11

[dreamt at waking:]

Heard by someone passing by
The cry of someone left to die.

26 November 2011

(SAPPHICS)

Calm wait of weighing out desires
abscond from perverse present
into ordinary now being here
love what is near you

orphan skills beset your hands
sometimes to stroke a lover better
examine this so breakable being
only to hold one

beingness breaks mourning always
that's what tries me to tell you
love what happens itself to you
sleep with the future.

26 November 2011

= = = = =

Mixed signals, Lydian.

Your slender waist

or touch her Etruscan skin

soft but thick

against the slanders of bumbling time,

she's a painting on the wall

that keeps its colors for two thousand years,

of calm beautiful persons

making love with their smiles across

the enormous room,

the world is a kind of gorgeous tomb,

run your fingers over her skin

or over the smooth old fresco,

no difference, we live forever

somehow, enduring, enjoying,

the conversation of such silence.

26 November 2011

POUR MES ELEVES

Can they see the darkness in me
this lump of lead not yet or ne'er
transmuted, can they forgive
the common coarseness in my desire
to speak itself in touch and telling—
I come towards them stumbling,
the whole of my being in my hands
trying to catch fire from them,
fresh kindling from the very new,
the ones who are new to the job
we try to do forever. Can they know
how much the least touch or tenderness
means to me? The word
has its own midnight in it,
love is like that, one word at a time.

26 November 2011

= = = = =

Everybody has a way of doing it.

Fish in the trees.

The stone starts to sing.

A hand trembles to write the truth
and the king flees his country by night—
dawn and no despot!

Except time. And desire. And doubt.

26 November 2011

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I wish I had been born in the Moon.

—Sterne

Phone lines though are
kindly perches for small birds
but I have more than once
seen a red-tailed hawk
so common in these parts
perched on one too
waiting the moment for the kill.

For this is America the Rich
where door-busters and midnight sales
take the place of ceremony and prayer.
And in the churches people sit
to be entertained by preachers
who make them feel good about themselves.
No ritual to distract them from their dreams.

But on the moon we would sit quiet to hear
carefully the rushing maybe waters deep beneath.

26 November 2011

= = = = =

In fairyland they don't grow old
that's how you know you're there

I have been and never told

Even you don't change at first
only when you leave that realm
do the grey hairs show, the limp comes back

I have been and come and never told.

26 November 2011

= = = = =

Things come closer now
they stand watching you

you hide with a towel over your face
can't see them they can't see you

when you look again
the Pyramids are gone

and off on the horizon you see
the great haunches of the Sphinx

moving fast, rippling
like heat shimmer on hot sand.

26 November 2011