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= = = = =

Circular breathing  
the one I meant to  
all along the reed  
snug in her lips

oboe or shawm  
the gyaling's snarl is best  
so many things to know  
so many things you know

circular breathing takes  
the world in and lets it  
like reading breathing  
say itself in the act

caught in the act of  
taking in it sings

the double-reed the crystal whine

so many things you know

so many things  
as children know  
so many things you need to know to play.

27 November 2011

## STEPS 6. THE RATTLE

The ache of every  
clatters in the man's rattle

it says we're hurting here  
come near

come share our pain

The ancestors take  
deep breaths with our lungs  
our breath

now they breathe in us  
rattle clatter

dried beans in dry hollow gourd  
you know how it's done  
it's the same everywhere  
every heart is hollow  
pebbles in a shell  
every heart knows how to holler  
tree gum seals the shells  
dry they are dry

they are the driest word  
a hand can speak

the ancestors swim towards us  
through an ocean of  
what we think is air

it is not air we breathe  
it is a very special gas or seeming

no animal inhales

we are alone in the earth

they swim towards us  
to be dry again

to celebrate the ritual of silence we cherish  
for them we are silent

it is so noisy being dead

they come to us to hear our silence  
do you hear me  
silence is a rattle

silence wakes the heart

the rattle calls them

calls to dry comfort

dry joy of being

being only one person at a time

joy of being one

you don't have to be special to know this

don't need a priest

to do this

a rattle rattles in anybody's hand

but to speak to them when they come

that is not easy

especially when it's for silence they come

silence of the rattle

the ancestors are very young

they have forgotten a lot

they count on you to remember

forgotten how to understand

things so easy for you  
the way a knee bends  
only one way  
or a tongue curls in so wet a mouth

the ancestors are younger than you are  
the ancestors are your children

they want to come again  
sometimes you see their footprints in the mud  
the snow  
rattle of hail on a tin roof

they are coming now  
you had to pick the gourd up  
you had to shake it

you shook it

a rattle means silence

the rattle woke the dead  
the cloud heard you  
rain hurried to drown the dry sound out

you shook the rattle and they came  
and they are here

now you are the one to whom they came

deal with them

take their silence into yours

and speak it

This is how the people learned to sing

(singing is learning how to leave space  
learning to let the groin speak through the throat  
to come to life again  
singing is the ancestors in you  
force of their silence  
singing is turning the body inside out.)

27 November 2011

=====

Street sign song  
enough Sufi sparrow  
sign enough a small  
stroll nowhere  
getting there.

27 November 2011



## PATCHES

as little saying  
as I like for once  
as you please also  
shirt shoulder recall  
another kind of snow  
leaning together us  
stiffquietly mends.

27 November 2011

## **DELAWARE**

the cost of rivers  
bottom showing  
dry afternoon  
almost alone with  
but the weather  
knew her even better  
narrowest pass.

27 November 2011

## **FARMER**

where beasts were  
and you named them for me  
old knees over stile  
some would live on  
some slaughtered for winter  
old knees no praying  
no time for knowing  
anywhere else.

27 November 2011

= = = = =

Looking out the window saves the world.

It exists in being seen—

watch how the Antarctic will change  
as more people come to look at it

We create the world by seeing it  
we create by witnessing

Is this an essay or a song?  
Or could I be wrong?

I could but it can never be.

28 November 2011

## STEPS (7)

To wake from  
this life

like any other dream

the bicycle

red velvet like iron  
inhibits the feel of things

are we surface only  
is there in the midst  
a meaningful plural of us

something like fish  
uncountably many

we live by guesses

of course I hold her hand  
of course I pray for her

hand of a ship  
prayers of a sleeping man

Benefit Street? Downhill sight.  
Old tall white pine tree?

some girl knows  
what she knows makes her sail away

to stretch  
a few words  
around her hips

travel in the north country  
speaking what I see he said

a pale house in the woods

the next morning  
came like an osprey clutching a fish

dying but excited  
to be part of the action

so few words  
around her  
even the slimmest hips

no rational objection

pry the song out of the stone  
translate the Latin  
back into Etruscan silence  
their full lips pressed together

no word escapes a kiss

a humming sound  
as of bees roused by warm November

nature but not natural  
not what we mean

sometimes brightness hurts

sometimes you know too much to go on

shiver when his eye is on you  
the eye on the church wall  
and what does he do with his other eye  
the one we never see

he sees her  
she is his shore  
a woman stepping up the sand of an island  
is pure theology

*the edge of someone going*

is as much as we know of god

you've got to want it  
the sea, the selvedge of desire  
you call the Other

and keep giving human names too

this girl this boy

and sudden makes them there for you  
approximations of alien energy

you suck them into your lifespace

you have come to the edge of him of her  
you have come to the edge of being

burn the ash to diamond now  
close your eyes now  
both in and out are closed all blue now  
the deer on the edge of the forest now  
can't see you when you close your eyes now

and only the trees know how to listen.

28 November 2011



## WARNING TO TRAVELERS

Carry the road with you next time  
put your fingertip in her mouth  
to help her say your name

when you've been completely pronounced  
move on to the next fountain  
typically a bare rock on the mountainside  
from which clear water trickles down through moss  
drink this and you're almost there.

What do people really mean by home?  
Be sure you want to go there before you set out.

As one day a little boy  
woke up and set out from his parents' house  
trying to find his way home.

28 November 2011

## STEPS (8)

Keep the rule  
the grey scale  
Peterboro riots  
asking. Asking.

the blunders

history walking its dogs

freemen shudder  
my god are trees

no one any more  
aspires to color

neutrinos nourish us  
massless intelligence  
death approaching

dead is the solar measure

the sun sends both life and death

It is the day of the road  
the guide comes  
the guide makes light

the light gives life and kills

solar measure

approximate the blue maybes

squalor of a book

Masses for the soul of

you break this brick

tall wall

rise a hod-carrier

rise a man carrying a single stone

and in that stone

some letters are

language

our final flower.

29 November 2011

## STEPS (9)

Become the because

life is a job of editing  
a call from your master  
rebel rebound

off usura's track  
liberal plenteous and dark

night nurture

now let The Cantos spend their song  
for I have worshipped  
thine interruptions  
and called them *Form*,  
Nietzsche comely

new structures  
are the best gift  
for we too were slaves in Ægypt  
our DNA compelled us

to assume the likeness of clouds!  
we dissipate by noon

rules of the house  
from which we went forth

travelers and too sure  
amend by autumn  
dread Michigan winter  
where Merlin raves

for he eats fallen apples  
dines upon fungus and bitter acorns

he has made the winter  
his special liberty  
scorning in treachery of court

laugh at fidelity  
all his money safe in his mouth

till some virtue hips so sleek undo him  
and he pretends to banish  
himself into what sustains him.

as if he vanished from us  
but this is book stuff  
and he did not

he is with us constantly  
the man himself is gold with grief.

## PISCINE

there's always something wrong  
a truck comes by  
the pool guy skims some scum  
there's always more

the shadows of lewd swimmers  
are trapped in the nice water  
the blue is scandalous  
plumbing clogged with human sin

he thinks, he wishes  
he could be out in Sherwood Forest  
swinging his big skimming net  
capturing unnamed butterflies.

29 November 2011

= = = = =

Day to stay home reading Persian  
day to be a storm cloud over the park

women walk around looking up at me  
they wonder if I'm going to rain on them

but even readers of novels are merciful  
they forgive the stories they wallow in

there's something about a kiss more like wine than wine  
it makes you forget everybody is somebody else

ah if I could be that one and that one could be me  
all the time like young hawks playing in heaven

sometimes the story forgives us too  
like those women on vacation in Portugal

who sprawl on the black sand reading my poems  
saying to each other That Kelly hasn't got a clue.

30 November 2011

= = = = =

Mostly we go forward  
all these cars are late to work  
listen to me studying the clouds again  
they are te conscious clothing  
of my beloved blue  
who left me long ago  
sometimes I can see her plain beyond the air.

30 November 2011



= = = = =

Nothing's happening out there.  
No wars, no politics,  
just internet and TV and local police.  
Hints of destruction  
whispered by the press,  
warfare always somewhere else.  
I will not listen to the world they sell me—  
everything they tell you is a lie,  
only the skin tells true.  
There was no Vietnam. There is no Pakistan.

30 November 2011

## SONATA

1.

But there's more to it  
Myaskovsky's first piano sonata  
and the cold wind  
from the south, the south  
in America is weird  
we run the other  
way when we can

2.

always music talking about itself  
just like (mean you) weather  
where the words flock  
trying to say anything  
worth your cold beautiful ears

3.

anything curvy is worth it  
body like yours you said  
defining her so now I'll know  
I'll never know  
she is the furthest away  
of all the little planets  
that swing around my sun  
where fire sets fire on fire.

30 November 2011