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novL2013

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The omen called everything
in the temple called everywhere

speaks the darkness
into the day.

Waiting for the instrument
to behave we grow
dependent on the crystal
structure of the mind,
its lines
of cleavage,
axes of thought,
fracture pattern of any sudden
sight.

It could be anywhere
but it is here,
the least likely criminal.
my left hand.

Who can say such things
and live?

Aren't there olive trees
older than alphabets,
and isn't there that single
isolated stone by the Bodensee
older than the earth,

the stone
that drew all matter to it
the way a word brings an image
to the mind,

the stone
of before the beginning?

To this day lovers sit on it
and think their thoughts
their hasty shallow thoughts
that cloud the crystal,
their breath on the endless mirror.

29 November 2013

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At least I'm not looking
out the window
where the world is waving
its trees at me

I know,

 know and am grateful

but just for now

I have to keep the objective fixed

focused clear as I can

and I barely can

 on the thing that has no name

prompt to any tongue

soon as it's seen,

let me see that other thing

the thing that knows me into knowing

and suddenly I change.

29 November 2013

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I lean on the obvious
to say the unkempt truth,
hairy answers everybody gets
when they stare too long at anything,
it doesn't take a mirror
to tell you what you don't want to know.

29 November 2013

TO AVA

I think of your Yiddish Siberia
the books the two of
us can barely read,
the language of our childhood
—for we were children together
though neither of us know it
but the pavement knew it
and the ginkgo trees, the crushed
fruits on summer streets
that taught us the beginnings of wisdom,

chokhmah, all the wonderful lies
that give us life,

yes, we were there together, still are.
some days we try to piece it together,
the absent history, the map of the place
we never really were,

o poor children

translating everything into language,
the fragments of identity
that might be you. Or me.
Or someone we'll never know,

because language is as sad as violins,
Vienna, faded roses tossed into the snow
on Thanksgiving so one doesn't have to
come home to withered flowers,

sad as animals, distances, hills beyond rivers,
sad as old people shuffling to church, temple,
sad as the skin on your hands
when you're not touching anyone,

anything

is worth a Mass, a prayer, pick it up
and remember the child you were,

every object has all fresh and full inside it
the secret of your childhood,

touch anything and remember.

Where did we come from

so be so far apart?

The Bering Strait runs between us,

between any child and any other,

we spend our whole lives trying to cross.

O forget this arid meditation,

I just thought of you and me

and language together,

how we flee from the languages we are.

29 November 2013, Boston

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Nobody knows the whole story.

That's why beasts are

daubed on the walls of Trois-Frères

and a man with a beast's head

leads us still into our dreams.

Every night! Every night

the dream comes

and tells us,

tells us nothing

but the pure energy of

something is happening

in me to me,

mostly we don't even remember

after the dawn abortionist

wields his shining knife

but we still wake strong

knowing something happened

29 November 2013, Boston

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I dreamed I saw your picture in the news
and thought I knew
you remember my voice in the nighttime
and made me say words
I never knew but always meant.

29 November 2013, Boston

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As if a word or a
warfare, no,
a piece of toast
left out for the fairies
and in the long night hardly sleeping

Betty's lamb soup set on the deck
casting its fat —
time
and weather do
all the work and we just listen.

30 November 2013, Boston

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The voice
is not just what it can do,

but what it is
to begin with,

 a tree
of offering the breath—

for every tree is a menorah
and every growing thing is offering.

30 November 2013, Boston

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Massachusetts Bay religion—

in a new world

all over again

we took the land

away then the land took us

and only the roads remember.

2.

To keep things from falling

out of your pocket

wear clothes with no pockets.

That's what I call religion.

3.

Reading over and over.

Or being bound

again and again,

bound to follow

what you read,

what your reading

made you believe.

4.

Sweaty handkerchief

dirty handkerchief

all our sins crushed together

in one story, in one pocket—

see what happens when you wear clothes.

5.

At the end of November

the sun comes up the street

from the south.

Lady Shemesh

saunters through fern tree, casts
her affection,
her perfection, over half my page
and leaves the other half
illegible in contrast.

The city
is in shadow still.

30 November 2013, Boston