

10-2010

## octD2010

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River from the lake  
where the first men lived  
a schooner up the Rhône  
into innavigable reaches  
where slow people talk  
by gouging rocks cliffs  
with signs they live by  
life after life. We belong  
to our landscape. Shapes  
shape us. Simple as that.  
Deep down we all are Swiss.

9 October 2010

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A list of paltry pleasures  
has to start with me.  
Savor my identity  
while a cloud passes  
nimble over middle heaven.  
I am what I think. If anything.  
When I'm asleep you're mostly  
safe, unless we endure  
dream tangencies and our selves  
touch somehow in the zero  
distances of sleep. I saw you  
last in Budapest. You  
never saw me at all.

9 October 2010

## INSTRUMENT

Nameless pen, bought  
along the Bodensee,  
(Rorschach maybe,  
big statue of Saint Jakob  
shoulder to the lake)  
squeaks when it writes  
like a hundred years ago  
when all our pens  
knew how to sing.

Now only businessmen  
sign their impressive  
names smooth on  
documents that mostly  
further impoverish the poor.

This squeaking instrument  
reassures me I will do  
little harm with what I write,  
orphan no one. Poets are  
relatively good physicians:  
*to begin with do no harm.*

Whatever torment is around  
we hide it in our own wounds—

pain helps us never to forget  
what planet we're still on  
and who you are and how  
to open up our mouths  
in quiet sentimental  
unalarmed screams.

9 October 2010

## KEEPING THE CURIA WAITING

The new Pope changes his socks:

This too is my body.

I am the glorious impostor

appointed by Spirit to

keep men from the book

and what it says in there

he said. Or maybe I

will say the word too

that I once heard him say

and I'll give back this

stone to its maker.

And all the laws are wrong

except what he said.

Outside in the antechamber

they're murmuring about me,

oh he's having his scruples again.

9 October 2010

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Opinionless  
the morning

Take that and be healed.

9.X.10

## THE RINGS

Time is waiting for us  
in the tree.

When I was young  
they showed me once  
the years all rolled up  
inside a cedar.

I stand beside my  
own now linden tree  
and wonder how  
much is left for me,  
glad that each year  
gets bigger than the last.

9 October 2010



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Time is stored  
in everything—  
is it the touch  
of human skin  
that lets it out.

9 October 2010

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Miracles enough to keep atheists edgy  
but Rapture reviles me for disbelief  
so I have come to this doomed lake  
seeking the equilibrium only  
water knows. I present myself  
to the sunrise, send my envois  
to chant at the noonday sun  
and at night lie down with every  
shadow, hoping the silence  
of the world will come  
visit me like a woman  
fast asleep on my lap.

10 October 2010

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Can motivation shuck corn?  
Can a single farm stand satisfy  
Sunday regattas of Mercedes?

Can we give something back  
to the bee? Why do I keep  
asking questions, don't I know  
it all already?

And if I don't,  
who does? And why? Wasn't  
there a time –was it a cave –  
when we were all in this together?  
Isn't there a license you can buy  
entitles you to meaningful  
doubt? Or a glass of milk?

What becomes of all the words  
we speak? What does a cow  
need to know about cheese?  
Everything's a product of our  
product, but don't we, like the moon,  
need a night off now and then?  
Can't the wind do some of our work  
for us, wind-farms off Nantucket,  
bagpipies on the Isle of Skye?

Just write it down—it will look  
like the answer. It worked  
for the Bible and Homer, now  
let it work for me and thee,  
word without end, Amen.

10 October 2010

## A MORALITY

*nec spe nec metu*

Things taking over.  
Moorland manners.  
Be civil as sunrise  
don't try to be natural

natural is itself or not  
evil out there  
waiting to be done  
also is natural

only you can do it,  
don't, this landscape  
already engraved  
deep in your heart.

How could you own it  
any better? Hope  
is a sad girl  
sitting by the fire,

try to rouse her  
from depression  
to joyous indifference,  
take everybody's side.

10 October 2010

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Lie awake at night  
frightened of myself,  
The snake of me the  
dog of me. Who  
else is there to fear.

10 October 2010

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Cold sunlight  
is the best color.

Silver in moonlight  
the best black.

Human thought  
pigmented by breath.  
Songs are all color,  
their words white white

afterimage of a love affair  
warm hand of a stranger.

10 October 2010

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All of a sudden

I have something to say

so I'd better stop now

there are children waiting for us

and how can we know them

they are waiting for us

but not for something we can say

only for what we do not know

and that, that alone

we can give them

10 October 2010



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An office under ground  
and everyone can see in  
through highline windows up the wall,  
clerestory, but nobody does.

We turn out to be intimate—  
you know what I mean, know  
what I mean to say and wonder why  
I'm so slow at saying it.

You are dressed in a Gauguin  
we all are amateurs again  
and come to market every week  
afraid of being cheated and we are

but never know it, or we're not  
and never notice, or we cheat them  
and only know it when they cry.  
I think you made me cry.

All it ever meant was to be close,  
just barely touching but quite distinct  
like flowers standing upright in a vase,  
a word we each pronounce in different ways.

11 October 2010

= = = = =

Southwest of nowhere  
we grow upset from children  
we used to know or be.

To lose by death's desire.  
Succumb. The shadow  
of a tall rock—they go  
to seek shelter from the sun.

A parking lot big as a city  
imagine it empty and the sun  
beating down, no shelter,  
you're in the middle of it  
and what do you do? It is for such  
as you that death was made,

originally designed to eject  
a mirror of your nervous system  
out into no-time space  
where it can find once more  
*a local habitation and a name.*

But somehow Nature flunked. Not  
enough instruction in the cell—so

another strategy—a life  
of meditative calm, focused energy,  
compassionate release—is needed.  
Then you can flee the parking lot  
and find outside *a changeling*  
*child* that you become  
and *feare no more the heat of the sunne.*

11 October 2010

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The porter at the gates  
lifted the latch  
but held the door shut  
with his shoulder—

Give way, I cried, but he  
whispered: Say the secret  
then I'll let you in,

There is no secret  
I whispered back.  
So in I came  
to my own empty house.

12 October 2010

## POLTER

Turbulence of adolescent  
lust. Confusion  
is a noisy house inside  
the flesh sent out  
there where the people  
lurk. Ghost in the hand,  
ghost in the closet.  
At first we thought Demons  
but the Priest barked  
all his exorcisms,  
no work. Or natural  
we thought causes—  
gravity, electro-  
magnetism, even  
the Weak Force  
that holds us together  
making its sly  
quantum moves.  
But no. It was you  
all the time,  
you body your sulky  
smile, your gaudy  
posters on the wall,  
your telephone.

Your body  
that we gave you  
that smug disaster  
turned against us  
and the plates fly  
off the shelves  
and the cat howls  
at knighting and the table  
sashays down the hall  
and the fridge keeps  
opening and shutting  
all night long. The storm  
that is your spirit  
will pass, a calmer theme  
will seize you, you'll fall  
in love and get a job,  
be pale and silent  
in a silent house  
just like us.

12 October 2010

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One more word before serenity  
breaks in. I meant to say it  
yesterday, while the dream was still  
warm in mind, how you looked  
as you reached up to draw the curtain,  
how you looked looking back at me.  
But I'll take them with me and study them.  
What I like best about science  
is that it is such a close rhyme with silence.

12 October 2010

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*no obituary needed for J-L G*

Hearing it happen  
you turn away.  
When you look back  
the wreckage is gone.  
Godard is still alive,  
the smell of his cigar  
lingers in the footnotes  
to all that we've seen.  
A fox on the table.  
A book spread out  
on a woman's behind.  
No way for him to die.

12 October 2010