

4-2013

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**When the handwriting changes overnight  
the man is clothed in white**

**he crawls through the window into church  
he pretends to be both priest and congregation**

**he opens his mouth and breathes words in  
air full of dust from rafters where sparrows flutter**

**he stretches out prone before the altar  
arms widespread to fly into the stone**

**this is what happens in our town  
and I'm the only one who dares report it.**

**21 April 2013**

=====

**Can it even trace the broken  
bone that folds the wing down  
and a sparrow falls?**

**Does it see it,  
cognize in what distant brain  
the neural transmissions of your misery?  
Destiny? Is there anybody there?  
Is anything happening?  
The grass knows how to grow.  
The dust on the road  
talks to the wind, whirls,  
every word wants to be the Bible.**

**21 April 2013**

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**There is caution to it  
like a cat's eye,  
you have horses  
we have deer but I  
have never ridden  
anyone except myself,  
hard, till the rocks  
under my feet began to sweat  
blood, you know how it is,  
you are desert too,  
night sky full of stars  
no one else has ever seen.**

**21 April 2013**

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**And she saw a mountain lion  
out there three years back, snow  
December little hill, and the next day  
his big fat paw prints chasing  
nimble wedge-footed deer  
tracks stopped at the cliff.  
A beast leaps for its life,  
another beast turns back,  
cautious as any other cat,  
full of *conscience*, that stir  
of energy inside that alone  
can make us bad or sometimes good.**

**21 April 2013**

=====

**I don't want to tell a story  
I want it to tell the story  
this demand defines me  
I can find glory in a falling leaf  
a transit of ordinary cloud  
but can I give it to you?  
Only it can tell, only it  
lets the glory speak, loud  
as Scarlatti on the harpsichord  
no way for it to be too soft.**

**21 April 2013**

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**Big themes boulders  
in your back yard  
reek of cat pee in the shade  
a kid digging little trenches  
and putting little plastic soldiers in.  
The war will never come, never go away.**

**2.**

**So I learned to read Greek one time  
by reading Homer. Anger and killing and why.  
I still don't understand what I read.  
Stars all over the sky, which one is mine?**

**21 April 2013**

## **ON THIS DAY**

**Parilia,**

**feast of Pales**

**goddess of field and flocks,**

**founding of the city of Rome**

**and death of Remus**

**who leapt over the *mundus*,**

**the sacred ditch and wall**

**his brother had just plowed,**

**the sacred enclosure that the City is**

**and the god Celer struck Remus down,**

**with a gold shovel, gold plow,**

**the brother weeping for his brother**

**showed no wet tears.**

**A dozen crows Romulus had seen,**

**all in one long line,**

**god-given ravens,**

**and thunder on the left.**

**But Remus laughed at this meek symbolism**

**and Remus died.**

**Later over the brother's corpse the brother wept,**

**Tamerlan dead, crushed by his brother's wheel.**



**Dzhokhar with his throat torn out  
lies in the hospital ditch  
writing on a waxen tablet  
all the lying nonsense that sends men to their death.**

**21 April 2013**

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Sorry, is that a world out there  
or is it only me?

Years ago

when I wore hats and ties  
I looked like what I thought was you,  
Quirites of Rome, workingmen at Midwood,  
Marine Park, New Lots, Ozone Park.

I read it all in some book  
on the border of Queens  
— two roses argent and gules linked —  
when woman appeared,

visio beatifica

as offered in churches or any passing Dante,  
there she was she always is —

*not by essence but by alterity alone* —  
sorry, I mean I'm not saying anything at all  
about the nature of woman, only  
about the nature of otherness, or is the other  
in her that heals the him in me.

And I would assume

vice-versa,

am I not your other, Beatrice,  
am I not here for you as you for me,  
to answer the howling autistic silences within?

22 April 2013

## **ARS POETICA 22.IV.13**

**As the words go faster  
their shape on the page  
breaks down. This tells  
something about me bien sûr  
but something also about  
them. A word is speed.  
Chained like a cheetah  
let it loose,  
follow it fast as you can,  
the word will always  
get there before you do.**

**22 April 2013**

## **MONUMENT TO**

**The brave men who leave  
nothing behind. Who go  
into the dark carrying  
nothing thereto. Just  
as being is. A sense  
of continuing a while  
in an unknowable place.  
And actually being there.**

**22 April 2013**

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No one is here yet  
the grass  
has a language of its own  
I heard it all night  
talking with the pregnant moon

each animal  
reassures the other  
the rock for water  
the mineral mind.

2.

So I've been on this road  
a long time, the saints  
keep moving their bones around  
until the whole earth becomes  
one desperate pilgrimage.

Listen at the open doors  
of the houses as they pass  
how boring the conversations are  
inside, how dearly  
I wish I could go in and be them.

3.

But the moon cheered me up  
before I went to sleep,  
she was big and bright and simple,  
all wedding cake and mistletoe

and I was me again, legs sore  
from sitting still, dreams  
already snarling at the gate  
but she was always calm

I don't dream you, you  
don't dream me.  
Nobody dreams us  
and the wind is always.

23 April 2013

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**You can tell I was reading cities in my sleep.  
Appalled by my footsteps back there on the road  
I woke and saw a single crow fly  
slowly to a low branch and look at me.  
How alone can anything be?  
That's a song, don't you hear the tune?**

**23 April 2013**

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**Father told father held  
me back forward  
into difference.**

**I waited at the gold gate where he worked  
to borrow as I called it  
money he had little of.**

**Painful memories. A park  
in winter a wolfish hunger  
for too many things.**

**Too many mes.**

**A lost soul answers back  
this too is paradise.**

**23 April 2013**



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**One morning long ago in Indiana  
I passed a prison where at that very hour  
a prisoner was being put to death  
by agents of the State, men just like me.  
Not far from the big lake, and over that  
another country. We are caught  
I thought by where we are,  
where we happen to be, what  
we happen to see. His death  
somehow left less of me.**

**23 April 2013**

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**If they travel north  
lured just by light increasing  
(as the professors say)  
and find a cold spring  
with barely a leaf to pluck  
did the light lie?  
Or does it have nothing to do  
with anything really but  
intricate desire deep  
inside their souls  
to be elsewhere in a rush  
of dark or light or heat or cold.**

**23 April 2013**

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**These little things we listened to  
an hour of dark splendor  
snatching language from its meaning  
snatching sunshine from the sundial  
setting storm clouds loose inside our clothes,  
oh mother me more, we cried,  
how can a bird be so big,  
how can the sky be so close?**

**23 April 2013 (Scriabin's 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony)**

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**Of course I'm sentimental  
I'm made of bread and wine  
like any Christian, made  
of desert wanderings like any Jew —  
everything feeds me, everything slays me,  
everything has a meaning  
and there's only me to understand.  
How can I leave anything unloved?**

**23 April 2013**

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**Call the world  
the multitask  
and do it.  
You can.  
Your eyes  
are the same size  
as the sky.**

**23 April 2013**

=====

**For I have read the words  
I found them written  
in dark places but they made me see  
I signed them out for you,  
birthday of a new idea  
old music kissing the nape of your neck  
soft and fresh, you all you from the bath.**

**23 April 2013**