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Strife in the library, skeletons
erasing each other's chalk

before the bell rings and we have to be.

13 September 2010

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Nothing understood
the rose of Sharon
flowered steadily
all August and September
despite heat and cold—
I guess all a flower
really knows is color.
Which puts it
one step beyond me.

13 September 2010

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Careful trunks
full of supposes.
What beast could
or carry so slight
a burden
 the air
on its back
is heavier than this
and the sky presses down.

13 September 2010

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I have a friend who packs so neat
his clothes that it oppresses me—
I want to send a black bear
to fossick in his snug valise—
those neatly folded ratty shirts,
those Liberty of London silken squares—
who are these neatniks
with their needy ways?
I am a lawn in need of fallen leaves,
I sing from scatter.

13 September 2010

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Dead leaves turning
into coins again,
fairies nearby
must be at play—

or praying is it,
I never know, seems
like prayer to me
to shift things

into other things
and out again
and never stalling,
prayer means

keep going
till the whole morning
quivers with seeming
till what I see

is more than I am.

13 September 2010

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Geese yelping overhead
or girls next door—
I'll never know
now silence soothes
and how.

13 September 2010

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Nobody loves like that no more—
he wants music to go like that,
her tongue quivering in his mouth
faster than he knew how to be.

13 September 2010

KLEOPATRES CHRYSOPOIIA

Be the old remember from before
clear the channel so the golden
barge of the Empress comes through
rubbing gently on the wharves
untinged by pondweed and meek scum.
A silken canopy shields her from the sun
but no man can say what color that silk is.
So in the dorsal stream she floats—
it's always uphill when you move through water—
with all due effort of the integers all round her
beautiful muscular ideas who haul her
bankwise to the place of knowing—
for facts are not fixed in mind but course
through mind as she does on this storied morning
when everything around us talks endlessly
and all we ever have to do is listen
but at the waking of the moon
what man can hear? So they
who float apart are carried soft
into the principles of knowledge by
our striving! Strongarm aesthetics!
Lost in the rapture of word
all meaning forgot.

14 September 2010

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The colloquial is local
the formal far.
That's one way to comb your hair.

Another is to breathe sunlight in
in winter, on a high terrace, the city
bluish grey all round you
and no disease dare dare.

Eyes closed face the sun
you are a park in the city—
you share your fantasy with millions
and call it home.
But what would you see if you really closed your eyes?

14 September 2010

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Flat forms in space—
I was the king of shadows
through the thick of time

I taught greasy string
to breathe back at the witches,
warm milk set out by night

to feed the fairies on my doorstep
maybe pleases them by pure intention—
make people happy is the only law.

And everything alive is people
whether you can see them or not.
Help without hope. Please without fear.

14 September 2010

MEXICO

The cost of someone
is less than the cross
they nail him to.

Calvary moves around
from year to year
and changes names

The blood is the same.

14 September 2010

TO THE CHRISTIANS

“When you give a glass
of water to a beggar
you give it to me,

when you execute
a murderer, slay
an enemy in battle

you’re killing me.”
That is what
the Incarnation means,

the God took human
nature on, became it,
took its vulnerability

for His own, the long
beauty of our feebleness
touched Him till we killed.

14 September 2010

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Sometimes meek angst
is ready to declare.
Then from the scubbled moon face
a drift of dark comes down
as shapely shadow. This
instructs us. Chic horror.
Glamor of the trembling breast.
Hand. From cheap guitars
so many fingers fall.
Webbed in wonder as we are
we have barely wit to groan.
Silent workmen from way down South
install intelligent neon lights
till we are wrapped round with words,
blue messages too fast to persuade—
pure instruction with no substantial form!
Fierce kiss of colors, hollow as a hand.

15 September 2010R

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In trees one
keyhole of light
the sun finds
finds the eye.
Blink back
to find night.

15 September 2010

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Nothing happening. Anxiety
too big and too little
to make much sense
of itself or that other one
over there—the day, waiting.

15 September 2010

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Sometimes it takes the pen
a while to remember how to write.
I must be patient then,
the words slow siphoned down my arm.
Who is writing whom?
Don't the words at times
seem to rise up from the paper
and the pen hurries to keep up?
Seeming. I confess at last: seeming is being.

15 September 2010

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Who were those women who
in my childhood taught me
what other women were like?

Actresses in black dresses
with mean lines to hiss—I loved
the sleek of their control,

women who knew the score.

15 September 2010

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DORAS CUMBLIN ERYTAXIS

it said over the door of the inn
so I paused my footstep on the sill
and bated. Who endures so glib
the messiness of human speak?
Sober in a drunken art, could this
be a plowman or a father?
A feather? **Weather waits**
for every man alive but women
make their own—THE PROPRIETOR.
I looked up to wave at him in the sky.

16 September 2010

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How can it be long,
song, when
days grow shorter?

True, a blind man might not
notice what you sing
or fail to,
 silence

is punishment
drives you on
to begin for the first time.

16 September 2010

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Scintillate or round about
an answer is always political
a candle always darker than its flame

remember that, body,
when your dumb muscles
start to speak

don't look at yourself in some mirror and say
how can this lump of shit mean anything
or have anything beautiful to say?

16 September 2010

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Come back to ordinary memory—
the bell is ringing already in your blood,
school will never stop beginning.
That's not a mule deer down by the trees,
it's just a dumb old big old dog.

16 September 2010