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CREEDS

1.

If only I could believe
a different thing
an eagle over the bridge
say, flying north
to another kingdom
mountains without policy
with a fish in his talons
as if somewhere up there
to feed another.

2.

Or the bear that one dawn
forty years ago leaned
his forepaws heavy on
the trunk of my father's
last car, in Pennsylvania
and he found them
when he woke and they
never would come out
the oil of those big marks
and he marveled
at them ever after

and I did too,
into such small
lives as ours
a bear!

3.

Or Rebecca carrying a cup
of soda at the Game Farm
myopic, nervous, gold
costume jewelry round
her pale throat, white
pants suit shunning contact
with the small herd of
deer around her knees.

4.

Or the buckthorn tree
shaggy, sharp-pronged,
leaning over the driveway
Wayne calls a witch-tree
but the local horticulturist
decries as an invasive
species for Christ's sake
it's right here, been here
for years, scratches

the roof of my car, I will
(as Pound writes) believe
the American. A witch
it is, and witches
you'd better leave alone.
What's a scratched
Subaru compared
to the life of a strange tree?

5.

Or even towels, damp
hung over the porch railing
to maybe dry in the sun
of a humid day,
the primal elements
battling it out
in cotton fleece by dear
mother-in-law from
Denver calls torrels.

6.

Or a tow truck pausing
companionably by a car
dark at roadside to see
if it's in trouble or not,

or not, but not his
kind of trouble, just
some lovers enterprising
within, so he drives on.

7.
Or a hummingbird
doing anything.

4 August 2012

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I wonder what I would be doing
if I weren't doing this
sitting outside a hot Saturday morning
reading tomorrow's *Times*.

The perils of home delivery—
is it legitimate ever to just be?

4 August 2012

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Fewer than normal
the stars incident upon
the summer skies—“want
their winter here”—
melodious discount
maybe, but the smell
of a small dead animal
persists—the living
is not easy—the sun
persists in breaking through
to perfume us with
the esters of us—
are we?—and suitable
accommodations must be found
each morning for hope—
confidence sleeps ill
on inflatable mattresses—
or drowse on fire escapes—
you can’t get there
without the weather—a change,
chers vents, lift up
your skirts and hurry hither
and take my breath away.

5 August 2012

SISTE VIATOR DOMI

Read without weeping—
weather is catching,
we caught our draught
in Afghanistan—
the way we caught Zen
from World War II.
When you send soldiers
to fight in another country
they bring home the *germ*
of what makes that country
what it is—not just ‘germs’
in the medical sense, but whole
geo-cultural contagions.
Improve our climate:
stay home.

5 August 2012

ODE TO MARILYN MONROE

Ink flows, thought recedes.
It feels like rain—do you?
All kinds of marriages
all kinds of weddings
the kind we doubt
the limber palaces we imagine
come floating down at sea
you hand them in with money ropes
you lick the stone that they rest on—
kiss the weather for me
and hug the wind, a day
will come and then another
and then the pregnant moon
gives your daughter to the light.
It is the twist of her lip that tells it,
there's got to be more than this,
what people worry about
endless heat wave too many prisoners
in too many jails, no kind of
care for the mentally ill, what do we do
with the old what do we do with 'me'
when 'I' become old?

When I ask questions

nobody knows the answers to
and I forget I even ask them
and a flock of pigeons flies away
over the tenement rooftops
and where is anything anyhow?

His words fascinated her,
they gestured to a world beyond the body
that smells bad and dies and rots away
and something might be left after
the ring of his voice? The shadow of words?

5 August 2012

= = = = =

A day of not thinking
because the humidity
so far safe in dim
but sun keeps trying to break in

how long did it take us to sit on a chair?
Or put beast skins on our feet?
And what trick will come next?
What else can we do to fit this alien planet we're on?

5 August 2012

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Connoisseur of balance
girls on the swingset
three hundred years ago an image
is always old the hand
is always ready to forget

can't swim can't ride gazes at the coachman
with a needy eye
or seesaw tomorrow
where they lay their fingers
lightly on the horse's withers
borrowing that in our
terms incredible strength
we have our own fortitude
for land's sake 90 years
but not much force
open the window Barry
so the snow can drift in
oh the deaths of Donegal
the pass of sorrows
past the bridge of g'bye
all the old stuff
other people's pains

that now are mine
come back that too is balance
did you think time
just stopped at one end
and never came down again
of course the children's
feet never touch the ground
push off reject the Mother
then the beam rides up
again or on the swings
the higher the further
but never never
save one time in dream
go up and up and full
circle round as if
you were the moon
rolls round this old tree
apple on the island
where Eve first set
herself swinging from the branch
talking smart and nibbling
that intellectual fruit
oh the white scarf
she let fall still
dangles in those branches
oh the weavers of cloth
the long sigh of mothers

remembering the birth travail
the wanderers lost in snow
looking for the window to come in
open it yourself
I'm busy with the candle
sticky tallow of dead beast
trick to give light
my steel is wet
my flint's gone west
are you honest
or clown in the dark
the weather changes
Dr. Lunacy comes through
horse beats at the portal
the hand of hoof
let it go further
and let them walk back
Watteau or Fragonard
the differences to me
fell in love ten times a day
because a day is
and what it's for
the other otherwise
one sun would be enough
to rise once for all
and night never
but in the dream forget

our fascinations
so be born again
needy as a foot for
the dirt beneath us
the smutch of earth
the sky's blue parasol
oh we are pretty children
in our breeze and muslins
we swoop down or climb
foot first the horizon
have I never seen you
before you were a queen
once and still my mother
calling from the window
they're all at table
lost father lives again
time to come home?

6 August 2012

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The wonderful capacity to seduce
people into themselves
a kissful smile of 'the creative'
poured out on all and sundry so
no one misses out on what you give—
reason to enact the speechful self
gunshots in the woods and no one falls
each river challenges the sea
take me in take me in
I would be a part of thee
and the sea does and the sea can—
be like the sea to everyone.
And the hymn books falls, the tune
slips out of the organ, a smart breeze
finds its way through a crack in the stained glass
a hall where St. Elizabeth's crown should be
and all the stuffy old religion comes to life
a breath a breath and a man nailing pieces of wood together
nailgun and frankincense, the priest
fumbles at her liturgy a moment
caught by a whiff of her own desire
a glimpse of silver-blue a fish sparkling
from pre-Christian waters, a nymph
abounding in ambiguities, a wet red rock.

Those are what I meant for you
stagecraft and eloquence and beat the heart
till it knows what it wants
and who wants you and why and where
you should meet them after the play
agree to everything. A play never ends,
the silent oak at midnight is deserted
the loves you lose come back at morning
mother of thousands you give birth
to every soul you ever touch or tell.

6 August 2012

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So many priestesses.
Snapdragons.
Queen Anne's Lace.
Roadside rivulet.
Because it finally did
rain. Spattered silk
interruptions of
rapturous production number
the flying glances,
we listened with our loins
to see those whirling dancers
for every one who leaps up lifts the world.

6 August 2012

ANGLES THEY WERE WAITING FOR

1.

Wait while having
who lit the light
touched the famished
skin of the oldest scripture
desert mountain
watered only by the wise.

2.

Those days the tree of heaven
parsed down its fruits
and the root impales the sun
we know that
who know so little else.

3.

Girl in a muffler
sitting in a snowbank
that scarf I knitted
from dull adjectives
to warm you scarlet.

4.

Crack open sound

and suck the yellow golden
silences inside—
not just one,
silence comes in many flavors
as many as there are vowels
in all the human alphabets.

5.

Tais-toi! Listen to the stars
instead of me, they glimmer
diamondwise, speak better French
than I will ever, listen again
to the velvet dark around them
where the savage consonants
roam free in space—
no language, only liberty.

6.

Help for me yet
weather is a kind of pen
filled with tricky ink
always writes something
never know what—
concert halls are usually kept dim
so you can really see the music.

7.

If not my eyes then whose?

Will you eat for me too

and listen to Bruckner for me

and drink my morning coffee

while I sit at the window

watching the red-shouldered

hawk patrol my yard?

6 August 2012

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Calmly forgetting and ablaze to know.

It almost makes sense.

7.viii.12 [dreamt]