

3-2012

## marA2012

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## A WAY IT IS

The pause is  
where sometimes the  
music is

or in the sky the  
cloud is not continuous  
so beauty comes

the way the blue  
between does  
blue silences

reading the eyes  
tell breath to  
stop and listen:

listen, the silence!

\*\*\*

And then again.

Poetry is the science of discontinuity  
braiding silences into words  
to coax some music down

from where the brain hides it

images out of context

words out of silence.

And prose is a field of new-fallen snow.

\*\*\*

How to hear

what is not there

and hum an air

that is not here.

And make the self-

evident less so

until it breaks

open and shows

the magic hidden

in the obvious

only silence knows.

\*\*\*

When the magician's  
fainted or asleep  
his glorious assistant  
still enchants the audience—

silence is the wizard  
words the girl in crimson satin.

1 March 2012

= = = = =

I want to look through your glasses  
drink from your paper cup  
stroke the skin you've never seen  
listen close to what you never said

I want my longitude to cross your latitude  
I seem to want an ordinary human thing  
you are a name that hides what I most desire.

1 March 2012

= = = = =

I turn a new month on the calendar  
my scream of terror  
hidden in the ripping of the page.

1.III.12

= = = = =

I want to make sure they  
think I'm someone else

someone they really understand  
someone equipped with the same

ideas they have already,  
an ignorant teacher, a friend.

1 March 2012

**(for ORESTES)**

ORESTES:

*(we see everything he describes happening on the stage while his voice-over speaks)*

I swear it was my sister's voice  
I heard above me and behind me,  
I was kneeling in front of my mother,  
my arms were clasped around her hips  
pulled against me, my face  
burrowed in her lap to find  
the place where I was born  
and still she said nothing, all  
I could hear was my sister's voice  
saying Kill her Kill her I kept  
hearing till I thought it was my  
voice and my meaning, it never was,  
I never did, it was Elektra's voice  
kept saying it and then Elektra's  
body I felt pressing against me,  
she was leaning over me, I felt  
her shoving, stabbing, someone sobbed,  
blood spilled down around my ears  
my neck, the body I held so close  
stiffened then suddenly went limp.



I still held on. The three of us  
went tumbling to the ground,  
sister on brother on mother, I never  
heard my mother's voice again.

1 March 2012

= = = = =

Two deer  
in the snow outside my window

one looks at me  
but both are browsing

two deer  
tout dire

tell everything, say it  
say it out loud

even if only the snow  
is listening,

only the deer.

1 March 2012

= = = = =

Places named for bridges and for brooks  
places named for what they contradict  
places in trouble, wrens dart in  
holes in house walls, coyotes prowl.

The syllables of disbelief come out of us  
as the names of ancient gods forgotten: Chair.  
Hammer. Cup. The holy ones of things made.  
Animals were gods enough in their own world

and all creation dreams of beasts like fish  
busy in the unseen unavailable beneath.  
Thor's hammer worn around the neck  
became Christ's cross—but that's just history,

the last of our grammatical mistakes.  
To think is to know but to know is not thinking.

2 March 2012

= = = = =

From the life of a stranger  
these strings. Of varying thicknesses,  
toned. The importunate hollows  
of the wooden things. Strange boxes  
aggressed by fingertips. Not me  
is the sound saying. Some else of a one  
trickles through tones. No one  
it ever knew, hence can well articulate.  
Knowledge is a kind of silence.

2 March 2012

## DUTCHESS COUNTY DAYS

There are plenty of sheep around here  
but their shepherds drive pick-up trucks  
and the shepherdesses all wear jeans.

So it's no feast for the lyric eyes but  
maybe the cosmic innocence of sheep  
makes something gentle in the folk around them

who maybe still fall in love a little more  
than farmers and insurance men and hackers,  
maybe the oily fleece left on shepherd hands

softens the pragmatic touch. Maybe somewhere  
out back of their minds they still can hear  
Theocritus' earnest gentle lechery urge them

to look up from their sheep to one another  
as sheep look up from their grazing  
a moment of truth then get to work again.

3 March 2012

= = = = =

Escape the trough  
of meaning. Spin  
the word and follow it.  
Kiss Mary. Kiss  
Martha. Go down  
in the basement  
and kiss Lazarus.

You are the word  
now, the only one  
left. It's you  
against the silences  
and you love silence.

It has to be  
this way, that's  
how words are.  
Obey yourself.  
Kiss Mary again.

3 March 2012

= = = = =

I wish I had something to say to you  
this morning something to tell. All kinds  
of things happen to me (people, I mean)  
but that's not news. But I want to talk to you  
anyhow, here I am with nothing to say  
but wanting to be in touch. Touch.  
I saw a crow on a bare branch in mist  
in snow. I share this morning crow with you.  
We are friends, so we are supposed to live  
at opposite ends of the earth, far from you  
far from me so all the landscape between us  
can fill with our friendliness. The sense  
that everything matters, everything counts.  
The silence we cherish is as they say pregnant.  
Everything is born from it. And you know that  
better than I do. That's why I have nothing  
to say but will never stop talking to you.

3 March 2012

= = = = =

That crow  
it meant  
so much

can't say what  
the mist the snow  
the branch the

shape of eternity  
with folded wings  
inspecting time

it makes my mind  
comfortable  
to think about the crow

perched there  
big on a small branch  
first thing I saw

this morning  
the first thing  
I ever saw.

3 March 2012(



**[for ORESTES]**

*(Elektra rolls off the bodies, turns Orestes over and straddles him—he is cushioned on Klytaimnestra’s body. Elektra is breathing heavily, sense of orgasm or profound fulfillment.)*

*(Voices live now)*

EL:

It’s done now, brother,  
you don’t have to hide your eyes,  
it’s only me,  
your own flesh and blood.

OR:

You’re so much blood...  
am I all blood too?

*(Elektra jumps off him)*

EL:

Go wash yourself,  
you know where the sacred fountain is.  
I’ll keep her blood on me,  
it’s my blood too,  
a loving inscription on my skin,  
a love letter from my father.

*[Orestes gets painfully to his feet and stumbles off.]*  
*(Pylades has been watching all this, perched on a rock)*

PYL:

What a magnificent woman you are!

*(Elektra seems startled at seeing him there, knowing he was here all the while)*

Pyl:

I've never seen such power,  
I want to throw myself into you,  
you're a fire I could live in

El:

And my brother bathes in water?  
you should go and help him,  
you're so close, he may need you.  
I dont need you, I need no one.

PYL:

Need has nothing to do with us—  
we are angels of desire, only love  
could have brought you to this mess,  
this horror on your hands,  
the red scripture on your face—

El:

You desire me?

Pyl:

Of course I do.

I am sworn to love beauty and terror,  
I have loved a leper and left my land,  
I have watched a girl kill her mother  
and all I feel is lust for her now, this minute.  
Now-- you are as big as my desire!  
You're the first woman I could ever  
say that to—so you must be mine.

3 March 2012

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Conic section  
of a shadow  
a shaded moonbeam  
breaking the branches  
and once again  
to be anywhere at all  
is to be in the forest  
is to be in moonlight

where the everlasting choristers of silence  
are busy emptying your ears  
and letting the shadows fall  
on everything you think you know.

What could anyone know?  
There are arguments on a drifting raft  
lovers endlessly quarreling  
who owns the river  
who owns the dark

and who will give all this to me.

3 March 2012

= = = = =

You don't have to answer me or maybe no way you could  
the poles outside my house are wet with melt the wires  
sing by themselves and refuse to serve my messaging  
because god damn it music won't belong to anyone  
and all the things I try to say vanish into music  
and no one holds it in their ears long enough to  
understand. I don't want you to understand—you do  
already, too much, you know all about me  
and in all your silences I feel great Love's judgment  
bastilling me with solitude—I, who am never alone.  
There is a rock cliff outside of Rosendale  
and an old wooden railroad trestle people walk on  
nowadays mildly breaking the law. I stand there  
with my eyes closed more times than you could guess.  
It is like being nowhere at all, quietly, at peace.

3 March 2012