

3-2013

## marA2013

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**1**

**The day the mountain opened  
the day the woman stepped out**

**but there was no the woman  
there was only a woman  
and she had her name**

**or names and they are written  
somewhere, not far,  
look around and find them**

**choose the right one  
and you can call her too.**

**1 March 2013**

=====

**A day when it's not doing anything  
but resting quiet, breathing around me.**

**A bird way up there  
going slow, big-winged,  
feather-fingered, vulture.**

**We are kin, we are doing nothing,  
circling, observation  
as vocation, the air  
not so cold today.**

**1 March 2013**

=====

**Need to make darker  
marks on the day.**

**Read from afar, a car  
parked in a tree.**

**Blue is creeping into the sky.**

**This campus needs a pagan chaplain.**

**1 March 2013**

=====

**So fw left to tell  
an Irish mile  
into the underbrush and back  
— or never back, we lost  
our footprints, must go on  
until the sea stops  
us in our tracks.  
As they say. And the sea  
is always saying. Listen  
if you don't believe me,  
the running hand the wind  
writes on the sand, the snow,  
sastrugi, the balance  
of blank vs. inscribed,  
we hear the quiet inscriptions  
waiting to be read.  
*It is not enough to understand us  
you must be the one or ones  
for whom we were written.*  
the sacred glyphs. A word in your hand.**

**1 March 2013**

=====

**The spilled ink the syndrome  
of needy women prancing at the door,  
the rain falls upside-down, the two  
white horses in our neighbor's field  
are very old. They have been here  
since the beginning (horses, women,  
the not-so-secret link between)  
how can two white horses be so old?  
Sump pump humping in the cellar,  
snow melt seeps down the shale  
on which this house stands. The rock,  
the leaves of rock, the percolation.  
Spring stirs, I can sense it but not feel it,  
like a needy woman about to call me  
on the neurotic telephone. Oh lord and lady  
mind made of sky, forgive our instruments!  
Sleek devices we carry to unnerve us,  
keep us connected with our ailments, I too  
have needs, and I hate them. Needs  
keep me from knowing what I really want.**

**2 March 2013**

=====

Maybe there'll be  
not so many words.  
Mugwort, elegant pane,  
mother-of-lily.

Once I was window  
now I am wall,  
there are consolations  
in most declensions of ontology,

waiting for the gate  
to open, praying to beings  
beyond our ken,  
closing the gate.

The culture of the island  
encourages distance  
quietly. Stare at the sea  
and remember whatever you like.

The best things in life  
are me. Solve  
for any me, this animal  
is your secret name.

2 March 2013

=====

**And said nothing though I listened  
some buzzing in my ears opening and closing  
as if the jungle had a door swinging  
shut and open in a fitful wind  
I listened till it was all my body  
spread out as the world, the stars too  
were chinks of light in my cracked skull,  
there was nothing but me. The deer  
run through me and the highways howl.  
Cars come and go, growl by in my head.  
The inside pretends to be outside, there  
where an impostor sun lingers on the end of snow.**

**3 March 2013**



=====

**And she said she's planting hellebore in Boston  
and in Pittsfield it's already up but no sign here.  
Snow last night but not much left.  
Sometimes they seem to get tired of running  
they pad along quiet as tigers then prance again,  
the joggers, the runners, so hard to understand.  
Practicing for a great escape? Hurting  
the body into dazed submission? Their goofy  
smiles when they come panting home.  
Should such exhibits in public be allowed?  
"What fools these mortals be" he said and flew away.**

**3 March 2013**

=====

**It is in a way a tower  
this room above the rapids.  
I climb up to it and am  
alone in it above the moving.**

**Everybody needs to have one,  
*a place apart above,*  
and till now I've had to use  
what most of everybody has:**

**a space inside personal aloft,  
a quiet angle of the mind  
that watches all the thinking pass.**

**But now I have a thing outside**

**twenty steps to my locked door  
and the sound of running water  
in there, I go in and close my self  
in openness above the stream.**

**Is this where I've really been all these years?**

**3 March 2013**

=====

**The tone  
of love and loss and meaning,  
and loss of meaning  
— the way poverty is,  
all the things we can't have  
become the same thing,  
all the losses are one loss.**

**Schubert, *singspiel*.**

**And the loss of meaning is the loss of all.**

**2.**

**When music fits the wrong words  
or the hope of meaning  
makes a song the words can't bear —  
all the bad operas with such fair music.**

**3.**

**But what do I know about music?  
Some song another sings  
is worth nine of me.**

**3 March 2013**

=====

**My spinal cord  
this stalk of corn  
whose crowded ears my thoughts  
break the calm day.**

**Be a woman, sunshine,  
be a revelator gospel-meek  
and gospel-fierce,  
                        be  
a pontifex of metaphors  
and breathe the doubters  
safe across numbering rivers  
into those meadows  
books analyze into love affairs  
but really, bless them, are fields of  
grass in this same sun.  
Be partial to my wishes,  
old geology, hold up my house  
and let a garnet loose from time to time  
to coax the falling light to stay  
one more minute color of the heart.**

**4 March 2013**

=====

**Somehow it always  
seems to be praying.  
The feeling comes now —  
maybe the words will come after.**

**4 March 2013**

=====

**The long leaves of liberty  
brown as oak leaves in winter  
shimmer in the wind —  
something is coming to set us free —  
could it be me?  
Ask yourself that before you go to sleep.**

**4 March 2013**

=====

Help me, come along with me,  
walk me through it,  
    this thought I thought  
and thought was mine.  
    Please, this once  
come with me, I never ask you,  
this time I do,  
    the quest is fearful  
and preposterous, to find the word  
that no one knows,  
a contradiction in the way things are,  
    an epic,  
a brave stupidity,  
*me mousikes*, as Cavafy says,  
with musics running up your spine  
down mine,  
    come with, commit,  
the time is tomorrow, the place is nowhere.

1.

Count the letters. What's a letter?

A shadow of the shape of a sound

cast on the page. Stone. Clay,  
wood tablet annealed in wax  
boxwood, sly knotty pine,  
the ashen bat.

2.

Or written on the air as faces  
the flesh as alphabet.

As if the Fayoum,

or Bolzano

where Ötzi's leather arms  
folded inward somewhere up  
there in the cold  
where life remembers—

come there with me,  
noses pressed against the glass  
that shelters what's left of him

*the man we know*

from our too urgent atmosphere ,

poor man, died in battle  
hunt or accident  
to linger with us,  
an ancient mark of meaning,



**I kiss the glass, press  
my ear against it  
to hear  
the word in his dead mouth,  
the word he died  
halfway through pronouncing.  
No, I'm not being macabre,  
I need to hear that word,  
there is hope  
in what he almost said,  
the resurrection.**

**4 March 2013**

=====

**The honest fisherman  
weeping casts  
the trout back in the brook  
to tell our tale  
to the river and the sea.**

**4 March 2013**

=====

**Mares cock  
owl's whistle  
and the tree spreads down  
above the town  
until every house  
is a fruit in it  
and the girl is safe again  
inside her dream.**

**2.**

**It seems.**

**It says.**

**It sleeps.**

**3.**

**Now be closer  
or pretend the eye  
can specify  
what it sees**

**oh summon me  
to be your raft  
your palanquin  
your mountaintop.  
For I would alp for you  
across the greeny plain.**

**5 March 2013**

=====

**I've been in the Rockies the Alps  
the Sierras the Himalayas  
but never yet walked on a glacier.  
But once on a cold spring day  
we walked on the frozen Baltic  
far out from shore, the live  
sustaining ice beneath me.**

**5 March 2013**

## **RITRATTO**

**I draw  
this picture of her  
to forget what I saw.**

**5 March 2013**

=====

**Something saying, something said.**

**It's too sunny to be difficult**

**I want to say one thing and get it right.**

**5 March 2013**

=====

**It's always right in there.  
But when the doors are all closed  
something walks inside the body.  
Walks upstairs and stares.  
Far down there you hear the footsteps —  
your footsteps coming towards you.**

**5 March 2013**



=====

**A man carrying a suitcase.  
In one hand. The other  
canted out a little to the left  
in hopes of balance.  
Penguin flipper silhouette  
as he walks up the hill  
if penguins had luggage.  
There must be a station  
nearby from which he comes.  
Or could be going towards  
but he looks dejected,  
tired, on his way home.  
I know of no station,  
only the man on the road.  
The bag looks heavy.  
I know what he feels  
I know how it feels to be me  
knowing how it feels to be him.  
That's all I know.  
The sun is out, it's not too cold.  
The road is as smooth and clear  
as somebody else's road can be.**

**5 March 2013**

## OSSUARY

**Room for regret.  
Bones of dead Christians  
behind glass  
beneath the altar  
side chapel I saw.  
To be dead  
is to be interesting  
I learned. Waxy,  
grey-white, tallow-yellow,  
split or whole.  
When the living marrow  
is all gone the bone  
becomes holy. Look,  
this could have been a saint.  
You never know with bones  
who they were or what they said.**

**5 March 2013**

=====

**Where was the church?  
Where was the steeple?  
Who climbed to heaven  
and never came back?  
When I was young I  
wanted to be a steeplejack.**

**5 March 2013**

## FABULA

But the king bedazzled  
by her beauty cried  
“Rather a salmon  
silver in my stream  
than a lost twilight  
waiting on thee!”

And she  
from inside the green  
shimmer that was her clothes  
replied in calmer manner  
“Better, sire, the sly  
silver of your thigh  
than such a brief word  
said over the forest.”

And Matter was her name,  
and we were her meaning.

5 March 2013