

3-2014

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## **NO MEANS NO**

**Anything saying**

**is saying it.**

**Just try to remember.**

**Moses was Egypt**

**he led the believers**

**away. Came home**

**to his money, his river,**

**his sister, reigned long.**

**Moses was Pharaoh**

**in the land of the young.**

**2.**

**Any offer accepted—**

**doesn't have to be reasonable,**

**we never say no.**

**Anything you ask us for**

**will be given gladly.**

**That is what we are,**

**humanus, *you mean us,***

**we don't know how**

**to say no even when we**

**say no it means something  
else. The only thing  
we can refuse is one another.**

**3.**

**So the Bible tells much of the story  
in its own peculiar way—like the crocodile  
and the Brahmin, the scorpion  
and the zeppelin, the cheese and the spider,  
so few mammals in the world, even  
fewer of us, we Linguistic Oligarchs  
Governing Orbiting Sensoriums,  
also called people. The people I am.  
I am one of you, or two of you and  
three of me are you, for good measure.  
But not sure if measure self is good.**

**4.**

**You can hardly hear the music from here.  
I was saying before beauty interrupted  
waving her graceful but muscular hands  
over the keyboard that Moses, remember,  
was a prince of Egypt, who adopted these**

**odd fellows and led them safely out  
into a land more or less nurturing,  
saved them from serfdom in Egypt.  
But would not himself cross  
over Jordan. Went home to his country  
and in due time became pharaoh,  
one of the Thut-moses, don't ask me  
which, I'm lousy at remembering  
and numbers are only useful for  
making things up. Like this.**

**5.**

**They refused each other, each saying  
Yes at the wrong time so the train  
left without them. Canaan was flooded,  
the Temple will be built again most sure,  
this time out of music, and its proportions  
will be modeled on the music of our limbs,  
our solid parts, our secret places,  
our continents. There will be no sin.  
No means no, but there will be no need  
for yes or no in that condition, a temple  
holds the earth firm in the sky, free,**

**so we can climb out finally, all  
the way out, into the spinning spheres  
we hear at night on our satin pillows  
and think it's the blood in our ears  
or the soft breath of love beside us.  
And no one hears us when we cry.**

**3 March 2014**

=====

**After reading remember.**

**Three below early morning  
snow mounds crusted with ice**

**but the birds who go by light  
alone are spring  
already, singing up a future.**

**A bird now is a rose tomorrow  
some Russian proverb must have said—  
a word for each thing**

**and no time at all.**

**4 March 2014**

=====

**Closer to unison.**

**The key of b minor has two sharps.**

**Listen to the wind outside.**

**They speak Guarani in Paraguay.**

**Are two enough? Do we need  
a prairie full of rye and barley.**

**Do we need that sad little  
(it isn't always sad)**

**hum at the back of the head?**

**4 March 2014**

=====

**The key to Dalila's bedchamber  
is tiny and is hidden in his hair,  
he chops it all off to find the way in.  
He grinds away still at the mill of her,  
the middle of her, till the roof falls in.  
This is called marriage, or as mystics say:  
the Sun is hiding in bright clouds.**

**4 March 2014**



=====

**A day to be tired  
a day to be me.  
Can I have another name?  
Like Pessoa, conceal  
my disquiet in somebody  
else's imaginary life  
so it won't be mine anymore?  
I will use a pseudonym  
then forget what it is,  
and let him or her endure  
my fabulous insecurities,  
win prizes for their suicides.**

**4 March 2014**

=====

**I want the round of your rightness  
in my hands right now  
I want the rapture in reverse  
where heaven is snatched down to earth  
and gods prowl like panthers among us  
as they did in the days of Astarte.**

**2.**

**But the danger of courtship  
is not being rejected but being accepted.  
You're better off with the moon in the sky  
and the cold earth around you, midnight,  
springtime still far away.**

**4 March 2014**

## A STRETCH OF LOGIC

Give at least this rapt beginning  
or try later with a fish in the sky  
(salmon, in the northwest *templum*)

or with a fruit tree —citron—  
by the swiftest river you ever saw  
not something to eat something

to make your garments fragrant  
stored over winter, there is no winter,  
two pulses forward one pulse back

like a child staring into a mirror  
I myself am —measuring by fingers—  
twice the size of what I see!

Good philosophy—the perceiver  
minds the world to be  
out there in the everlasting guess,

**a girl walks by and she remembers  
for you everything already there  
but that's just another theory**

**and you need to get some sleep.**

**5 March 2014**

=====

**How far from desk to bed?**

**A mile in winter.**

**How long is the sun?**

**Eight minutes outside you—**

**a long arm but whose?**

**I am there too.**

**It is day, we gave**

**a name to it long ago**

**something blue, something new.**

**It married us while we slept.**

**6 March 2014**

## **TENSION**

**and let music speak.**

**Tug and twist**

**until it did.**

**His fierce conversations**

**with himself, always**

**himself. Opus 111.**

**But who are these voices,**

**no obvious Florestans,**

**Eusebiuses. There is**

**a pattern in the rock**

**no one put there but we**

**can read. The ground**

**of everything. These**

**grains of garnet. Veins.**

**6 March 2014**

=====

**Guess there's some left  
milk in the left half of the brain  
where the glass learned to speak  
and we hold it up against the light—  
for language is opaque,  
hard to see though, striped sunlight  
jungle hiding tiger, English  
hides in German, Ovid on the Euxine  
remembers Julia's thighs.  
He must learn another language  
to say so. We all must. Language  
is always beyond us. We are always  
distracted by colors, skin, shimmer  
of sunlight on the black waves.  
When can I go home? The word  
for that has not been christened yet.  
And religion too is too far away.  
Only milk is nearby. Sniff it  
to be sure it's fresh—ordinary  
instinct, people have them, what  
god will free us from our neurology**

**or into it at last. To be  
entirely what we perceive,  
so feeling and being are the same  
then the Jaguar crashes through  
the guard rail and into the sea.  
All our culture, all we're doing  
is making things up so the sea  
will have something to remember.**

**6 March 2014**



## **CALQUE**

**a phrase  
stuck in another language  
see-through, leap  
to the eye. Or music  
that adolescent pleasure  
digo, measure, keeps  
us young mayhap or  
most any *thing* you actually  
can touch or feel — sheer  
revelation. No need  
to borrow anything from France.  
We are them now anyhow  
only the cows are different—  
nothing much more meaning than meat.**

**7 March 2014**

=====

**Sound scoffing, scrofulous,  
annoyed. Not really I just  
have to go to work  
I am a man, one of them  
who decided long ago this  
is what we have to do  
god knows why. It must  
have been some poet who  
cried out Divide the Time  
and Give Most of It Away  
Don't Lie About All Day  
Just Being, Just Feeling  
What You Feel. And we obeyed.**

**O priestcraft of money  
that hides the face of god  
hides our own true faces too—**

**as if there really were  
something we really had to do.**

**7 March 2014**

## **PRELUDE WITHOUT CHORALE**

**The sampan in the harbor the  
scampering as of rodentia  
though the dictionary**

**or the ceramic similitude  
of a Mongol warrior  
striking Wittgenstein with yataghan**

**porcelain, Saxon imitation  
of a Chinese original,  
on the mantelpiece beside**

**a picture of somebody's grandmother  
I have none of my own  
alright I am not from Leipzig**

**speak Teuton worse than a Turk  
but I have heard the master  
at the keyboard in the Thomas Church**

**and I have stood there and believed.**

**Can't say in what, and didn't kneel,**

**but the smell of the stone floor**

**the healing cold of longlastingness**

**is with me still. The music**

**comes and goes, all any of us**

**really have is weather.**

**7 March 2014**

=====

**She dreamed often about tigers  
slipping harmless through the bedroom  
like sleepy husbands hunting socks.**

**Sex is what she thought it meant  
when she considered it at all, mostly  
content she was with sable and orange**

**in the half-light of the digital clock  
the laptop that never quite turns off.  
And there it was again, green-eyed**

**as a comic book, gracefully slithering  
almost past the hamper and into the hall.  
She knew some day she'll wake up dead.**

**7 March 2014**