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I'm never sure when I've begun
I want this rain!
Secret of human happiness to want what is the case.
Let me go rouse the sparrows,
Lincoln is alive again
walking the boundaries of a common state
o Divide, Divide!
and we will be beautiful again,
this damaged patrimony, this angry house.

10 March 2011

=====

Looking at the face plate
I could see that you called.
What did you say
when I didn't answer?
What message did you decide
not to let me hear
hours later when I came home?
Were there animals in it
or birds, lianas, jungles, rivers, stones?
Was it a pebble in your shoe
that made you call,
a sweat stain on your shirt
a spill of white wine
barely noticeable in the grey day
like the shadow of a thought,
a smutty thought,
was it rain?
And what did you want of me
and what did you think I would say
if I had been there?
Did you think I was there all the time
hearing the phone ring
seeing it was you

and not answering? And what
would I have been thinking about then,
what do I think about you?
They write books about this.
They listen to the phone buzz
and have weird ideas about the no answer
then they go out and look at the moon.
What else is there to do,
ever? Except now it's raining,
the pale wet tiles on the patio
remind me somehow of your face—
symmetry, color, lucidity.
Not actually all that different from the moon.

10 March 2011

=====

We are living in the End Time
and we always are
and always have been
world without end Amen.

11 March 2011

DEMOCRATIC

demos maybe

but no *crate*, no power

to the people,

power

is the very thing

government taketh away.

So 'democratic government'

is the horrendous oxymoron

we peddle and endure.

11 March 2011

=====

Enough politics. Trees.

Trees were given to us to think about

then to print on

all the words we thought with

to think about trees.

11 March 2011

EPITAPHION

Too quick to worry
a child's pen
writes fewer words
with more conviction.
I too was an instrument.

11 March 2011

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Give you my sleep
I have left over
the dry rocks
above the tideline too
belong to me.

Rest there, warm
your back against them
cold twilights when
you can't tell where
the sea has gotten too
your eyes so closed.

The plan was for this to be morning
and all the rest supposed to come
out of that

—a young woman
with an older woman, waves of the sea,
gentle, persistent, unendingly faithful.
κύμα, a wave. Sometimes one kiss
lasts ten years. Sometimes a kiss

has to last a winter. Every morning
renews at once the love, the separation.
the terrible simultaneity of those,
the sheer ordinary distance, all those
mindless rivers and mountains between.

12 March 2011

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I keep thinking you're supposed to come back
just because you've gone away so I do
and there I am. Stuck again in the present
begging new people to impersonate old roles
in this improvisation of a life I never wrote.
So I face the wall and count the ruddy bricks
or sit on the ground and taste your shadow move.

12 March 2011

=====

I waited till it knew me,
machine-tooled, micro-threaded
till the thing held fast.
Any thing. It is inserted
into the world. Firm-socketed
or screwed tight. Fixed.
Like music heard once
too often never unlistened.
Or image drives out image. Gone.

12 March 2011

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RUNAWAY HORSES

I woke to hear the paper
beneath your words

or the poinsettia, how red
looks black against the morning grey

is this wound wandering
or did the hills move while I slept

waking is almost impossible
the horses will never come back

did I sleep while I was walking
why doesn't anybody know me here

the paper breathed up in a breeze
so light I couldn't lift it

I didn't understand the words
how they manage to come from you to me

they rode me into sunrise
dumb cowboy herding phantom longhorns

but the light was the same

the light was the same

change me hard the clouds propose

I couldn't bring your face to mind

too many images between too many images

your eyes in profile sometimes I can

locusts that year hopping wild

crossed the Snake before them into Oregon

you waited for me on the porch legs spread

it was too small to be anywhere

brief town waiting for its mother

the paper settled back, the word shouted

still couldn't get it

I guessed my own language

who else can I be, I wanted to so much

it was moving all around me

is this a letter written

or a room full of shadows

can I stand up and reach the ceiling
or ride all the way to the wall

is this a fugue? it was a horse
she didn't know she just kept playing

I hear your fingers not the instrument
no other sound ignored me so

can I make music with your hands
with your skin

sound of a thought slipping down an arm
yes it is, it is another destiny

linked to you from where they ran
the way sunlight links to stone

but you will leave me one fine night
the way the hills lift this morning

bring me with you
I will be your promised light

show you all the things that I can't see
all my seeing will be your eyes then

and nothing left for blindman me
except the image stored up when the hillside

opened its quiet rusty door
I saw the kind of life they lead inside

they have no light in there
but love is their light

it flows out from a creature like a lamb
but very big

and no iron is permitted in that music
and the horses who ran from me are pastured there

smiling gauchos with insolent sombreros
chatter my mothertongue I used to have

there are voices everywhere
there is nothing to forget

they filled my mind again with images
they forced my memories out

no room in the Inn
the Christ Child caught in your hair

that picture will not help me now
chilly Fitzwilliam clean manuscript illegible

who was even looking when you stood
naked on the hilltop crying my name

holding out towards me the jawbone of a deer
its little grinding teeth came loose

scattered gemstones on a mischief earth
an old man calling for his father

mischief in a mirror
Melchizedek is it you with wine-stained clothes

offer me your cup for I drink no wine
but there is something other in it

my leprosy lets me swallow stone
you are an odd priest to meet in this sad sand

an odder even woman in the park

yes it was Vienna, we lied about different things

and that was the end of music

diamond in the shuttered window bend to look

lovers at dawn uneasy now

because they have to go back to language

or there it is again, the written page

touched and not read, seen but not touched

all our senses each its own delusion

every sense its own desolation

I rode into town looking for you

the locusts leapt about our legs

who killed that deer I wonder

I think the paper tells the real name of her

there are few angels west of Donegal

and the horses have vanished in the sea

America was old even before

the Indians got here late

so old it was the first the early island
garden from which the first humans fled

began their migration to square the roundish earth
slowly wisely made their way back

Hopi came home first
holding scraps of maps, scribbled paper in their hands

to find the way they listened to the wind
that always lies and always tells the truth

and the wind says what it always says
you're here already and the earth said

there is nowhere else
sit down and feel me beneath your bones.

13 March 2011

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The glamour of discourse
upends me—there is truth
and there is aftermath
when the blond sunshine falters
and for a second the unforgettable
actual color of thing breaks through
and we are—for a moment,
mourning dove—at home in the world.

Sky clears through bare trees
the best light, meaning
breaks through the beautiful
certainties of that text
written by no one,
alphabets everywhere—
but that bright sky
even everywhere.

Patches of snow
imitating heaven
irrigate inconspicuous
garden futures,
jazz in the basement of the earth,
Mahler on the moon—

and from the leaden statue of a dryad
Pan's universal semen slips—
children usually are the only
ones who see it,
morning's remembering dew.

14 March 2011

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I wanted to say something
so I said this
to get something said
something important
because unimportant
in itself, no message
no gospel, no vital
information, just plain
information, universal
medicine, a sick man
cured by staring out a window.

14 March 2011