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We go slow in this country
because we don't know what to do
or where to go, but It tells us
to keep moving so what else is there
but one foot after another pausing
frequently to look at other people
clueless as I am, or at bright objects
set out to catch my eye along no way.

15 March 2011

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

Am I all right?

I am, but with a good deal
of left thrown in
and a horse that won't mind me
and two girls I picked up last night
three decades back won't let me sleep
and I have to hold my house up all day long
with the weight of a waxing moon
heavy on my head
and don't forget the stars
and all the bodies I pray to
in the deep curvature of the night.

15 March 2011

= = = = =

Nothing waiting to do me.

Ink, a lapse. And light

sneaking the window

where would I be

without holes in things?

Some days I want

and am simple.

Others I forget

and just study what's

there. Here.

This astonishing does me.

15 March 2011

READING MONTAIGNE

Reading Montaigne. The stars came out,
hills everywhere. As if the wheel
invented men to roll it. We
are the handmaids of gravity,
nature's henchmen, hermits
hiding in the crowd. I admit
the impossibility of being. I am
capable of nothing and do everything.
Where is the world when you need it?
Women in that end of the province
tend to be handsome and wise. Once
I had a vineyard and the vines
bore grapes that turned all by themselves
into wine right in the fruit, something
to do with weather and sugar and light,
waiting, birds fell drunk to the grass
where all my servants sprawled.
Chemistry is unreliable to a fault.
Time is always interfering. A salt
solution behaves differently at night.
Fact. And ghosts walk down my corridors.

15 March 2011

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Sutures

stitching

x to **y**—always

the same unknowns

whose values

inconstantly vary—

one more blue thing

a wet slate roof.

16 March 2011

= = = = =

Prescient, the eyes
turn to where the light
an eyeblink later
goes on.

Faster
than the speed of light
the thought to see.

16 March 2011

= = = = =

Stroke the rain

everything looks back
with my own eyes

*

We both belong to the same seeing
eyelessly vivid

a drum beating in a vacuum

nothing to hear.

Nothing to fear.

16 March 2011

= = = = =

Nine hens for Saint Patrick
some flying some roosting
in an apple tree, why
always are groups larger
(smaller) than the other
always a patch of skin exposed
if we are people,
even Irish who once
upon an era went
into battle naked, only
one gold ring round their throats,
nine hens in the yard
of someone else's farm
I have no truck
I have skin, I don't eat
much chicken, there is a grief
in eating animals or really
eating anything at all,
what did the world ever
do to me that I should ravin it
o Manichean? All right.
A day is nearby, a day
to swear by, one more
equal-night afoot—
remember the Oracle Chicken in Chinatown,

how many lives did she foretell,
prophecy the actual?
She could be any bird—
how many bird cries come true?
Down by the bridge a five-star eagle
floats dangerous above the ice-boats,

why not each thing another thing?
the only mathematics in the world
deals with the relationship between
a bird in flight and its shadow—
what else is worth knowing,
know that and all the rest is known,
the gates of Byzantium fly open at your call.

17 March 2011

= = = = =

If I ever told you what really happened
it would not have happened
it would only have been told.
Something has only one chance to exist,

you can say it or you can day it.
That's why windows are so important—
you sit there and stare out and decide.

17 March 2011

RIDDLES

(1)

At least listen again.
A boat cracks against the dock—
that's easy,
 the bird
screams in the rigging—
name the captain.

Every riddle is insoluble,
yields some answer
but leaves a residue
of image, surmise
of what could have been,
what could still be
besides all the things it
is or seems to be,
the radiant residue
left out of the answer.

All the wrong answers
love us too, all
the almost right ones
come telling us the truth,
the song, the goods,

the captain is named John
or James, Peter is fishing,
they have brought in
bass and bluefish.
But why is the sun in the sky?

17 March 2011

(2)

Volume of flowers
solve by conic section
inverted pyramid
out of my blue vase
small mountain lilies
pale, purple as afterthought
enduring morning sunlight,
this flower lasts
as many hours as there are petals
in the mass of them,
scentless, full of freshness, light.

17 March 2011

(3)

Among nearby things
what is nearer than air
thinner than water
brighter than fire?

(4)

Who let the man in
who speaks in the child's voice
when the newborn
says human words?

17 March 2011

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Every language
has its own god.
Or gods. The
Dioscuri, the twin
gods of English.
The lonely, lovely,
gods of Greece.

17 March 2011

= = = = =

There are no foods in the temperate
we must you and I
dine upon extremities of deed and grief
and so outstretch beside
each other's dream space
an open door
into the unslept morning be with me.

17 March 2011

(5)

(Riddles)

Dreary common room of the Departed Club
whose members “broke the telephone”
that is, had passed out of our space
still speaking. And here they spoke still
and the living come to listen.
I was one of them, still alive I think.

17 March 2011

= = = = =

Be sure a boat
some after things
the wake we leave
in coming through
the forest where
the Other People
still live, the ones
with fur and wings
we think but actually
they are clothed
in thought alone
real as we are
as we are. The trees
are watching us me's.

18 March 2011

= = = = =

Colors taught by flowers maybe
the bar too crowded to decide
prematurely grey or excess of youth
she spindles your attention and
whatever you are or have
reaches out to near her—who
knows what the boundary of
a person is, how far you have to go
inside to touch them at all?
Repeat this observation till
she notices, he acts, she reacts,
they go away. The way people
do. Rats in crowded cages
grow combative even without drink.
And all that music and the lights!

18 March 2011

