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let me luster
there is a way
and some meaning
a limestone gateway
ruined by rain

things wear away

there are children
again and again
no place away from weather
broken sky

no way to not
speaking, getting even
with them, boardwalk,
timothy grass
phragmites

[late February]

25 March 2011

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The Feast of the Annunciation

is a commemoration of the conception of Jesus in the womb of Mary

it is her reception of the information

the Messenger instilled in her and she was willing—

so much is needed for the simplest thing,

an incarnation,

all these mysterious abstractions

so a god can sleep safe inside a girl.

25 March 2011

= = = = =

Waiting for things to settle in
the sun glances over the maples
have I gotten the picture yet
am I ready for an actual day?

Nothing's easy. I keep saying that
when things break or fall
or miss the right time. Why
don't I listen to what I say?

Because nothing's easy. I can't
even let myself hear how really
easy Nothing is, how close
the calm is, the luminous mind

25 March 2011

(A few pieces from a concert in February)

The walls rise up
from this trumpet call,
granite cracking through the sky.

*

Take me
wherever your breath goes
I will follow, I have no choice,
there is nowhere to stand
but what I hear

*

Dies iræ—
when we lose
the *tonus*, the ancient melody,
we lose the words too
and what they mean.
Now the words
are just along for the ride
even though they
are what makes the car go.

[25 March 2011]

THE DEJECTED

Color of human oxide
I lie unloved
among the fuses,
I try to stretch out
towards those I vaguely remember,
I spell horizon with a K
and clutch it in my teeth.

[25 March 2011]

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There is a blue glint
in the closed eye

fire engines roar through dream
hosing dust on noisy trees

it's smoky in here
the sly gravity of meat racks

poor luffing sails of
limbo's schooners—

sleep so deep no point in wake up any more.

[25 March 2011]

BALLADE

(after Ysaye)

1.

New-laid on illuminating gas
lamp reveals a Paris street.
Fog parts. A woman not too young,
a man not too old. Both faces
painted. This color against time,
my mortal enemy. Gaslight
works against meek dreams—
tabletop, a glass of milk greenish
by a drunk man's head. Or sleeping
maybe only. Mirrors everywhere
as if there were something to see.

2.

Ghosts of vanished theologians
renew themselves on twilit streets
married to the god's game they play,
and who better than these girls
violet-lidded under iron awnings
waiting for a book to come along
and love them. They kiss
like swans and make the lake forget.

3.

Limp into tenderness—no one cares
what the waiter thinks when you cry
when the water muddles into the Pernod
and makes the green go milky, the little
song of ice swirled gently against glass
sixty years ago I knew this too.

[25 March 2011]

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I'm still a child
silenced by my incapacity,
a child among adults
who are children too.

Can't hear. Can't get
what they're talking about,
knowing, playing.
But in the window I see

the far land, my home,
ma mère la terre
who asks nothing of me
but to be.

25 March 2011

(towards *Striations*)

Rescuing Persephone from the underworld means rescuing woman from the world of being under – under the male, under the weight of childbearing, under the decades gloom of child-rearing. Bring her back to the blue flower of simple desire she had bent to pluck when Family Matters seized her and dragged her down. Hades is her father's brother—Persephone is carried off by that most unglamorous relative, the uncle.

How bring her back.

How flower.

The lion of desire rips open the earth with his claws.

And what do we find inside? The bodies of the living and the dead mingling together in unholy miscegenation, dreaming each other's lives. That is the underworld, where we don't know with whom we sleep and who we are when we wake.

Are my dreams mine, or are they yours, whoever you are, who sent them?

Or should we just live inside the dreams as much as we can, till something comes and rips the dream apart, and drags us out?

Out into what?

Tear open the image
and find out who you are,

we are buried in what we see—

so the claws of the artist come and tear the image to shreds—

only when the image is torn to shreds *but you can still see the image*, only then can
you understand what the image meant,

understand what Persephone is.

Cutting is decision.

Scalpel, scissors, claws.

The artist *decides*.

She rips Persephone's pomegranate open
inside I see the girls I loved in high school
and the boys who loved the girls I loved in high school
and the boys who loved the boys who loved the girls I loved in high school

No it's not a pomegranate
or not only the forbidden fruit
it is her billowing skirt

her billowing palaeolithic skirt made out of skins
and the animals whereof the skirt is made
the animals are alive their skins alive they roar and bellow in the skirt

it is her body they are
she is the Mistress of the Animals
and is on

the artist rends her skirt and lets the people out

Persephone lifts one gleaming seed to her lips
and bites it gently so the ooze of life slips out

the sweet. And far away
above all his she sleeps

her arm thrown back onto the pillow
and in her dream all the decisions decide. [26.III.11]

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Sometimes living people are
actually the ghosts of ghosts.

Someone dies in ghostland can
be born here and look like us.

If you offend one of these you
are offending the ghosts whose

ghosts they are. In that unseen
world beings linger, or come

to us or leave us behind and
they have all too many names.

[27 March 2011]

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Every country foreign.
Every school conducted
in an unknown tongue.

Everything is far away.
The sun has so many eyes—
that chateau on the hill

this leaking water jug
right now. Every
lette from an unknown enemy

is signed *Love*,
and that also is a painful
part of the truth.

26 March 2011

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Just when I was getting started
I got there. How things begin
to let me go. Sun meshed in branches.

So much answering to be done,
so many endless operas.
I hear voices so it must be now.

26 March 2011

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I seem to parody myself.
The child is a parody of the man
and so it goes. Bridges
are for standing on and looking out
over a landscape you never
will come to cross.

Prospect is all.
Letting things fall back into place.
And now they're mocking me,
the sun fully erect over the empty trees.

26 March 2011

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The day the brain stopped working
it said I quit
I have been talking to and for you
all these years and nothing happens—
you just get older, fatter, thinner, whatever.
It is time for something better.
I will sleep now
and in my dream create a better you—
someone who will listen
and follow my prescription
to bring us both beyond this very sleep.

26 March 2011

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There is another universe
and this is it

the dream I didn't have last night
becomes me now

the thing I call my past
is still going on in some other place

and someone else is me in it
coping with consequences

as I must now with this
preposterous morning.

27 March 2011

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Coming towards a flood—a fire—

Lot and Noah were the same man

the same daughters, same story

once with fire once with water

and there is no next time.

There are too many daughters now

and Gomorrah need not burn again.

When you decode the Bible you get into trouble, but the stories are irresistible, all those myths—take them apart to make secular sense. All those stories are maybe fewer than they seem at first. Story over story posed. Everybody knows this, but nobody says it out loud—the stories are too useful to Jew and Gentile, atheist and pagan alike. A story has a meaning for every mind, the way the sun shines on the bad and the good.

27 March 2011

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Could there be a word left in this hand?
I'm writing even as we don't speak
we never speak we only send postcards
every few years from Venus or Jupiter
confessing how much we'd like to meet.
Don't even know what you look like anymore
and I have no mirror, do we even
want us anymore. If a writer lives
long enough does he finally begin to speak?

27 March 2011