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“It never entered my mind”  
the cost of knowing someone  
multiplies the mistake.  
Evangelical satyrs stumble, fall—  
mind settles out and leaves  
the water in the water goblet  
clear to the eye.

What else is hidden there?  
What does a dream really do to the day?  
Can you love enough  
to sift the gold dust clear  
where it tumbles down Pactolus  
—gold is always in love with where it was  
wants to go back and shine below the ground  
sparkle in the mother’s eye,  
vaults treasuries buried beneath the elm  
light fingered tree that steals from every wind  
some moisture to remind. Raintree.

Love gets the best of us. But we apathize  
each other, drowse in the long bed.  
I am not responsible for your dreams,  
am I? Do we walk unwittingly

through those strange corridors of others' sleep?  
If you appear in my dream  
you owe me an entrance fee  
or do I owe you gold  
for guest appearance  
nighttime reciprocals  
are hard to figure out—  
hide what you mean  
and go to church among believers  
while no thought of what's up there  
ever enters your mind—  
behavior has a mind of its own—  
dream is deepest forest  
and never more than a glimpse of the sky.

Thunder weather tells me so—  
raft on no river.  
All day I carried the sea to the boat,  
all night I light the stars up one by one  
there is no dream that has not afflicted me—  
who is this who has entered my mind  
to patch moving images on my sad thought?  
How dare they picture inwardly  
what is never out?

I will speak  
to the Dreamer, I will summon him or her  
before the assizes of the heart

to accuse her of fantasy,  
beauty, 3D, phthaloviolet, rayon, moon,  
billion conjunctures of disheveled mind  
he leaves me to make sense of, I wake  
to hear her snickering.

Oh for the gate  
to the mind that marble threshold  
that bronze voluted entryway!  
The guardian of that portal is my breath.

9 August 2012

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A patch of sunlight  
twinkles at the corner of my eye  
what kind of bird is that

a legion of light  
the kind a hummingbird intersects  
fluttering to its feeder  
red-vulva'd plastic cup  
twirling in the middle of the air—  
light feeds us we feed the birds.

9 August 2012

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Walkable document rehearsing skylight shadows  
let your outline fall across this page — a word  
is no kind of answer, are you? — sunrise also  
makes things buzz among the green companions—  
or path the myriad with me, maiden fern, coeval apple—  
“a round of fiddles” and no Bach, busy scraping  
on the saddlebow a bleak outsider to Lakotas  
came and claimed to be a dream, a simple time  
of night with pictures in it, from which religion  
and agribusiness step down as from a cloud  
and there you are with nothing in your pockets  
and no pants to sew them on. Images kill.

9 August 2012

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It takes me eleven lines to say  
what Dante says in one  
if even then the sense gets made  
that makes the senses thrill  
with laudable for once appetites

to know and by knowing come  
to that gateway and go in  
where someone waits for you  
and (surprise!) you're there for them,  
you are the moral paladin awaited

to heal them, guide them and be done.

9 August 2012

## ARS NOETICA

Don't want it. Poems as pick-up lines  
in an outdoor bar size of the world—no  
conversaysh without flirtaysh—all psalms  
such harsh seductions—but whomever

are we hitting on who sing such stuff?  
Angels don't do sex (or is that just papal  
propaganda) and even if they did they'd read  
not our blogged effusions but our hearts.

As you would if you could look inside me.

10 August 2012



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When you live out of town  
they leave you alone  
except when it's summer  
when they swelter and remember.

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Let someone say it, not me,  
this compliant about more than weather—  
picking out pieces of the past—moving books,  
twenty years of paper, shifting offices,  
choosing from a lustrum of my poems  
to set before the notional audience,  
thunder weather, swelter motion,  
compiling a book of essays made  
up of what I thought I thought  
and thought I could say and said—  
all this pastness round my sweaty neck.  
I want the virgin day, I want tomorrow  
naked, a fresh breeze sweep down  
from the hills of autumn and no remember.

10 August 2012

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It gets darker as it gets lighter—  
that kind of day and no rain yet.  
Jungle calm at six a.m. Now  
the autos start prowling through the trees.  
Spatter of rain, then not. The way  
people drive! I hear their squeals from here.  
A shrink in the sky could tell lots  
from the way we drive. And it is useful  
to remember ‘auto’ is the Greek word for ‘self.’

10 August 2012

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A shower a shame  
rumble in thunder—  
world where nothing's  
real except the trees.  
From a white sky  
what kind of pain?

10 August 2012

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Be fascinated with success.  
Kiss the reigning sovereign's wrist  
and skip the abdicated. Luck  
is contagious. Good or bad.  
Be on your own side for a change.  
That means be definite.

10 August 2012

## PROLOGUE TO *ORESTES*

*(The woman or man who is to be the CHORUS, in costume, comes to the edge of the stage and addresses the audience.)*

So I would take your curious faces  
and press them to my skin—  
and then I'd let the play begin.

Because a play on stage is nothing but bodies  
bodies making language happen to each other.  
That's why you're here, to see  
what bodies say.

Young bodies  
with ancient names. It's a family—  
every family is always ancient, deep embedded  
in irretrievable recollection, always young.

There was Aga Memnon to begin with—  
away ten years at stupid Troy, let one  
daughter be sacrificed to some weird god  
to make good weather. Got home at last

found his wife sleeping with another man  
and that scoundrel ruling from his throne.  
Wife and lover killed the husband—common  
story, cut down as he took his bath.

What followed was unusual, was for us.  
His son fled or was sent flying for safety.  
his other daughter lived in rags and squalor  
hating her mother and refusing love.

When would he brother grow up and come home  
and kill the unrepentant bitch who  
killed her lovely half-remembered father?  
That's now. Here he comes. And she is always waiting.

Come feel the lust and anger on my skin,  
lick the taste of vengeance and repression—  
then sit back and let the play begin.

10 August 2012

## SYRIAC ELEGY

The import of rosy flowers  
 on a green bush. Very green.  
 Mandibular impulse at peace—  
 no engulfing needed now

though there are those who swallow  
 mirrors and the walls left bare  
 the shadows slinking homeward  
 from the rowdy fair. Late summer!

Clouds of organdy, air a challenge,  
 heavyweight atmosphere knockout punch,  
 hide me in your bosom, child,  
 I am the annotation and you are the text.

2.

You must have already guessed the flowers  
 what kind they are (you know now  
 little I know, so few names, Botany 101  
 so long ago) so you can tell by the shade of green

the woman I'm not thinking of, the church  
 I never visit, the music rattling on  
 in the back of my head, the chipmunk  
 glimpsed in the breezeway. Or was it a rat?



3.

What was all that about mirrors?

Do you mean those women from Miami  
who stand nervous at the ocean's edge  
worrying about Cuba or their husbands,  
the intractable mercies of human life?  
Or do you mean the ones so beautiful  
their images march with them everywhere  
to satisfy a famished audience's eyes?

Or something in between. Something dark  
in the hallway just after dawn, a gleam  
and then it's gone. And it's inside you  
and you know that's all you'll get of this day  
that one little sheen against all your doubt?

Hold on. There are dolphins in the sea—  
it's not all sharks out there, the gulls  
woke me and the Christians came home.

4.

Peace, sister. The eyes have it.  
Pink of the roses quicksilver of the glass  
over the dusty window—same old story,  
leaden plates engraved with artless forgeries—  
look old, be old. The cashier

does not even bother to look up.  
The invisible man buys Kleenexes  
already his tears are on the way.

5.

Book of Lamentations.

Lost mirrors.

Children waiting to be born,  
oh I've heard it all.

Non credo. The moon's  
voluptuous sarabande,  
month-long striptease,  
and when the clothes  
are flung away there's  
no one there, the sinner  
on his knees before no cross.

How much can a lover stand?  
A breeze, a difference.  
That's all we ever want.  
Sit down beside me  
and tell me all your lies  
and see if I can tell  
your skin from my own.

11 August 2012

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Walk down the hall into sunlight  
for a moment I'll see you in silhouettes  
then they'll dissolve in glare. Color  
hides form, form hides spirit,  
spirit hides the other side of life,  
the slippery edge of time where something  
else begins. But for now you all  
belong to me by dint of observation—  
what I behold I hold. Whoever  
walks away moves deeper into me.

11 August 2012

