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Warp the one eye  
rainstorm  
close to moondark—who  
breathes such thunder in  
and then lets speak?

Whose breast  
a resting place?  
For we were best  
before we were born  
the most we can hope  
a mooring for the night  
maybe a dream  
where an ancestor comes  
stands clear before us  
and tells us what we know  
already but now  
we know we're not alone  
but in that company  
is there one  
who really knows  
how to be more than I am?  
Or they all know  
and I know too—

will I be brave enough  
to bite the fruit I know?  
These weird globes  
whose shadows even  
fall on this window  
when the sun sets  
and I'm left alone  
with what I think I know.  
Some other place.  
An animal with stripes.  
A man on a tractor.  
The wagonload of cauliflowers.  
See, there are other people —  
autistic aubades  
not even never.

14-15 August 2012

## AMERICA

That low-lying land on the horizon  
is America. Twenty miles is far away.  
Ocean comes between  
and ocean is its own.  
The sun's broken light  
the colors of our politics.  
How to be Eden eludes.  
How even to be now is hard.  
And here. One glimpse  
of a postcard sunset  
from a few miles out at sea  
and all my hope springs up again —  
this coast could be the first time.  
We could still be on our way.

14-15 August 2012

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Or throw away the only thing  
links you to the past —  
onionskin carbon of a letter never sent—  
the obsolete technologies of touch

—and where are you now?  
I thought you were my woman  
he said and she said I'm nobody's  
so he said I told you you were mine.

And so it went, the old  
thomistic logic of the schoolyard  
I can pee further up the wall than you

but your mother drives a green convertible

and nobody really likes anybody,  
have you noticed, even though some  
of them now and then fall in love  
that changes nothing, just everything.

Remember we used to want things to be fair?

15 August 2012

## *AUTORITRATTO*

Bark of the wet trees

(bark could be of a fox or a maple)

wet bark of the tree

(only a surrealist would think of foxes)

((but anybody would think first of dogs))

((((I never think of dogs, I don't even use the word)))

so I'm left looking at this mottled surface

upright, blotchy, part eroded bark, part

of the splotching is sunlight, not much,

more rain coming, thank goodness, not

very fond of sunshine either

(((((what a monster!))))))

15 August 2012

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This feather I carry from book to book.  
I call it moving, and I can count its barbs  
if I so choose—when I riffle through them  
gently it looks as if in some small world it's raining.

15.viii.12

## COMMENSALS

They share our table  
beasts of our field  
apes who were men once—  
evolution not a one-way street  
Darwin a typical 19<sup>th</sup> century  
ameliorist, progress, progress,  
progress, as if time  
were a simple river  
carrying us all along  
to some single future  
luminous by preference.  
But apes were men once —  
and with our ridiculous Olympics we  
mourn our lost agility of  
tree branch and cunning toes.

But time is no river,  
time is lateral, flux and reflux,  
time is difference,  
and apes were men who lost the way  
or god help us chose another—  
I shudder at my shame.

16 August 2012



## FENCES

1.

How hard it is

the settlement around our ears

the polity

*Zaun* ‘fence’ —> *town*

‘the fenced-in place’—

town is terror and protection.

No wonder the no-account streets

of Red Hook nighttime scary seen,

“now we’re all locked in for the night”

said the ghost in the story—

empty midnight streets are shouting,

I lock myself in the woods

beast liveness

growl of perpetual adoration—

no beasts are atheists—

oh if we could only know

the god of deer and the god of crow

—perfect replicas of our copycat minds—

I have prayed to the god of woman

that I might be more than a man.

2.

Politics. Stercor.

The dungheap of the state  
breeding “leaders,”  
maggots of the mind.

3.

Writing the thing is need.

Some scare.

What can I do?

I can make you.

4.

Each one says that

to his young fere—

old words best for young men,

saves them from whatever.

Sharp old words,

a little smelly, a little whiskery.

5.

Let me tell you what to do

till I am you

and you are me

and I can live again  
millenniums of you.

6.

Enable angel. Fill up time—  
only we can  
make time happen.  
An angel's yesterday is tomorrow.

7.

Smelly? Simplicities  
of biologic stance.  
The scientific method  
wearing old clothes.

8.

Come play with me  
before it's time to go.  
After forever  
there is no bedding down,  
no campfire on the hilltops,  
no skin.

9.

We are so hot for imprisonment.

If you leave out all the people in  
schools, jails, prisons, hospitals, hospices,  
asylums, sanatoriums, reform schools, housing projects,  
how many actual free agents are left?

Now leave out the 9 to 5 workers and commuters,  
how many now? One old man cursing in the woods.

A gaggle of stoners giggling on the beach.

10.

Don't fence me in.

As they used to sing.

Before they did.

11.

Politicians try to trap your mind.

Make you think about them—  
that's all they need.

The mental energies of you,  
love or hate, bless or blame,  
doesn't matter, the energy's the same.

Don't think about them—  
they steal enough from us already  
without making us waste our minds

on opinions, on issues  
we cannot hope to sway.  
Unless we become they.

12.

The opening obvious  
but where does it go?  
A door leads nowhere—  
it opens and closes.  
It reminds you of nothing.  
It is a silent mirror.  
Have you ever really found a door?  
Have you ever gone in?

16 August 2012

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The inner gypsy  
rules my eye—  
I see what you hold  
holds you,  
your future already  
fumbling with hearts  
and spades—things  
will touch you  
till you scream.  
Then you'll deal  
another hand, another  
future bothers me  
to see—I don't want  
to know what's coming  
to you. I close  
my eyes to be free.

16 August 2012

= = = = =

Sights engraved in mind  
not exactly memory  
as if scurrying from branch  
to branch there's always  
an image of a branch  
reaching out to the image  
of your hand, a hand.  
And so she stood  
in the doorway  
at the top of the stairs  
by the bridge over Tannery Brook  
a kingfisher soared up from the stream.

16 August 2012

## WAITING IS ITSELF AN ANSWER

maybe. The train  
may never come,  
empty platform  
with one hard bench  
down there may be the  
actual, the whole reality.  
Below the ground  
you hear things far away  
things you're not supposed to hear,  
up the tunnel from which winds  
sometimes pretend an arrival  
but not yet. Tubes  
under the earth. Empty  
platform, tile walls,  
nameplates with a number  
on each, same number  
meaning nothing but a gesture  
at a grid somewhere up there.  
Few primes. No irrationals.  
An empty bench, empty numerals  
trying to mean something  
to me. I am alone  
dreading any other.  
Terror of what might come  
intrude on my silence,



something too much like me,  
too different. Come  
to infest my emptiness.  
Why am I here and not  
elsewhere, where is there  
anywhere to go?  
No train. Sounds far off  
sounds close, the come  
and the go of things  
that left me here. Poor me.  
This silent place  
below all sounds.  
Once there was a bird,  
a pigeon thing down here  
with me, not long,  
flew somewhere away  
and maybe out, rats  
ran between the tracks.  
the third rail hums.  
Or is it the light.  
Sound of danger.  
There are rooms  
way down there  
in the tunnel off the tracks,  
strange rooms, who  
goes on there, once  
or twice I've seen the cavemouth

as the train lurched past.  
And that too was empty.  
When there were trains.  
Now only sounds.  
Say yes Tell me  
I have told you  
enough of what it feels  
to be me.

Let me  
be quiet as cement  
or tile, cool numbers,  
enamel, steel,  
walls. I walk  
along the platform's edge,  
the pure electricity  
waiting down below,  
dirty trench through which  
the clean power flows.  
It brings the train  
notionally. It is grammatical.  
It is like religion  
running on for centuries  
furred over ever deeper  
with time's scum.  
It does not come.  
I go to the bench  
I sit, book in my hands,

I try to read,  
the book has extra pages  
in it, words  
no author ever wrote,  
the text from elsewhere—  
magic spells, brief lives  
of the prodigals, I lisp  
a magic formula  
and nothing happens.  
I speak another, louder,  
shout it up the tunnel  
down the vaulted overhang  
and nothing happens.  
Or everything does.  
With these words  
the world creates itself  
again. Have I made  
all this happen?  
Isn't there anybody else?  
Is this present moment  
the actual future of no past  
suddenly inhabited?  
This story is too early  
to tell. *Who made you?*  
asked the catechism,  
every word a lie.

16 August 2012