

12-2012

## decB2012

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## AN EVENING IN NORTH GERMANY

Symmetry at such small cost  
just ask the Turkish driver  
what's the best place in Hamburg  
yellow flowers in such cold  
hard to credit travertine  
could show intimate detail  
keep weather in your pocket

are you sure it's not plastic?  
evidence of artful fix  
pearls around her throat painted  
damar from the Carib coast  
we all hid what we needed  
but what about you and me  
I lost that blue long ago

now I have to bother girls  
to lend me some of their hue  
arrogant after-carriage  
it squalls the trombone you heard  
we play house until Messiah  
leads us to the rock garden  
where roses know how to talk

simple enough. so clear each  
part of it, the whole obscure  
drove me to another speech  
where men were fighting with knives  
but why I never figured  
their language made them do it  
the dog couldn't even bark

we're at the mercy of talk  
all we know is dangerous  
friends tend to keep you waiting  
slowly drifting to the north  
to seize my primal color  
asleep in the dark courtroom  
whose judge drones lucidly on.

4 December 2012

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But were they too waiting  
and we it was who came  
late to the table

all out of breath  
apologizing in gasped clichés  
while we tried to find the right  
place to sit or stand?

That it's not only  
we who are always expectant,  
always pregnant  
with some alarming consolation,

shadow on the windowpane  
voice in the doorway  
we have always known?

I ask more questions  
than the dog  
asleep by your footstool  
in that old painting,

Greuze is it,  
in the Leipzig museum.

Listen,

you can hear the summary  
judgment of its breathing  
dim in the hearthlight  
even a dog can dream

and you were sleeping too,

5 December 2012

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It takes three to play  
four to put  
the fish in the net  
five to cook our food  
so nobody's hurt  
and seven can eat

But only one  
to sit and think  
what all this means.

5 December 2012

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It feels like the preface to something  
car rolling into empty parking lot  
the sun baptized in this quick little stream

under a friend's new house  
who is my friend?  
describe Future Art right now

know more than you're supposed to  
in school we had to play a game  
boxball in the cellar pin k spaldeen

girls and boys together.  
What is a girl?  
Why are there two kinds of us?

5 December 2012

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Twilight  
of the master race—  
the *Herrenrasse*  
is actually made up of *Frauen*.

5.XII.12



## TAUTOCHRONE

close to the end of the edge —  
    no more séances  
spirit-dabblers  
why have you forgotten the dead?

We made so many  
in this lifetime, this cruel we  
of the birch tree meadow,  
forest of beech trees,  
    we made so many dead,  
don't we even want to talk to them,  
to learn what it is  
    that we have taught them,  
where is our Ouija board now,  
the linked clammy fingers in the darkened room,  
the voice from nowhere?

    A hundred years ago  
the dead were rarer, more precious maybe,  
worth seeking out,  
    risking sanity and reputation  
to have converse with them,  
    the curious prose style of the dead,

the solemn vagueness of the not quite gone.

Of course they're confused,

    how can they know  
much more than we do?

    But didn't we, even so,  
give them a chance to talk  
to tell us what they knew?

Tell us at least  
about the great moment,

    the 'distinguished thing,' the extinguishing,  
the door opening and closing,  
    the last step.

Do they even know that, or are they caught as we are  
mornings, waking from hectic dreams  
that keep us from seeing the road outside,  
crows in the bare tree.

    And they may have  
birds there too.

6 December 2012

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Who are the gods of the other trees,  
pine birch beech ash maple?

If I speak for myself I'm big ego.  
If I speak for us all I'm presumptuous.  
Therefore to speak an agent-free language,  
where thoughts think themselves  
and things happen and get noticed  
and language lets it all

I'm assuming everything has its god.  
Or nothing has.

Which would you rather live in?  
Poor Hitchens got it wrong —  
it's not atheism that will save us from religion  
atheism is the last stand of monotheism.  
It's paganism that will save us,  
the many gods will free us from the one.

6 December 2012

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Grip it upside down  
and let it dry out.  
Then fill it with new ink  
and write the truth for once.

6.XII.12

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They all look alike  
they are people  
they buy things from one another  
slowly they decide what words mean  
slowly they speak.

It goes on every day.  
Other animals are puzzled  
but have too much to deal with of their own.  
The people walk around  
as if they own the place  
and soon they do, as soon  
as they make the word 'own'  
and spread it all around them.

6 December 2012

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Rotor, rounding, saying what?  
 Die and born again,  
     no passive voice of die,  
 no active voice of being born,  
     what we do  
 by ourselves and what is done for us, to us,  
 the language tells us,  
     or tricks us  
 into believing  
 that time is an agent  
 we say time passes,  
     but like Giordano  
 sneering at the zodiac I ask  
 aren't we the agents of time,  
     don't we pass it,  
 pass it through our skin and hair and eyes,  
     pass through its  
 mild astringency,  
     its cling we call remembering?

The funeral cave at Alopetrypa — why  
 do we think they honored the dead bodies?  
 What did they learn  
     that love had not taught them?

*To cling to the matter of what I was*

I give you this bone

I am silenced by a new person.

How do you spell me.

Why is the spruce tree conical

the pine tree irregular, a free verse of branches?

Why is a pyramid?

All beliefs come back distorted

like passages in books we remember wrongly,

competition of the towns,

bones

of beasts and men sprawled on the rock face —

no women's bodies were ever put there,

they are hidden in secret places,

O love, the compassion of your glance.

All the things I let myself forget

life after life —

I need protection when I go out

a dark blue cloak,

a strange kind of light

that turns my shadow red —

near the end now

when I fumble with the fetters,

want, not want,

I know only the affinity.

Browne reminds us

it is not that the magnet draws iron  
but that metal and lodestone attract each other  
that taking notice of what is there  
is also a reciprocal.

If I leave now  
I leave a great thought  
in the lurch —  
                  so stay, love,  
until I can tell you this,  
whatever it is,  
something of you and something of me,  
a resemblance or recollection,  
shadow of a passing bird.  
          It is true.  
And you have heard it before.

7 December 2012



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As if according to his desires  
light began to wake in the meadow —  
though it was hardly that anymore, was it,  
with all the saplings grown up and what looked  
like juniper grown up and shadows  
still intriguing everywhere. But light  
it surely was and he was seeing.  
So the dream was over finally, like a door  
slammed and he could still hear the echo  
but no clue as to what had been going on  
with him for him in him in that lost room inside.  
A forgotten dream is the only absolute.

8 December 2012

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The YouTube you just showed me told me  
what I never knew I knew.

I grew up on Slim Gaillard  
and never knew his name. The beat  
was criminal, the quack  
of the guitar inveigling, his words  
taught me to make my own

I had first to learn all the others,  
the so-called real words, ones  
that adults knew. But not you.

The you I meant would only make  
sense of the loony noises I would make,  
moon talk and jive from Jupiter  
planet of fat men in love.

8 December 2012

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Glossy new asphalt  
in drizzle.

                  Shimmer  
in wet trees.

Wherever I look  
seems a quiet glory  
a house of air  
to live in. The sheen  
of everything!

8.XII.12

= = = = =

The causes of waking  
the batter's ready to be poured  
beaten again just before  
and the doorbell ringing —  
in those days they had doors —  
and we go back to the movies  
sly Christians sneaking in  
to watch the appalling lucency  
of twelve foot high seductive faces  
whispering to your hypothalamus  
and the sun was still shining when we came out  
and every sight seems bathed in sin  
and the world is beautiful again.  
The bottle of blue perfume in the drugstore window,  
the girl with the useless umbrella waiting for the bus.  
Everything makes us shy with pleasure.  
A dog trots by and that is almost pleasant too.  
But dogs belong to the legal party, agents  
of the Pope and the police, dogs know  
what you're thinking. And guilt comes down like evening.

8 December 2012

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The only thing that really belongs  
to us is the blank page —  
everything else could be anyone else's.

8.XII.12

*end of notebook 351*