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Help me lift the bond
the money meaning is so heavy
the hook won't hold

a folding cane for an old lady
a washing machine left at the curb
why are there sparrows

life answers its own questions
and silence becomes noontime
when the petals surprise us by falling.

15 December 2010

= = = = =

Billeted already, as with troops
stalled in a big house, its owners
cowering in the dower house,
so quick ideas take up their
residence in the mind. Vendetta.
Advertising copy. A young woman
on the trapeze and what will come
of all her leaping. Down the silk
later she comes. Matter smiles
at some of us. The ladder breaks.

2.

This is the form of things: the steam
radiator hisses, the train is on time.
On frozen nights we wait for sunup
but dawn seems to be the coldest time,
the cold ardor in the furthest east.
Come back to me, please, let me watch
as you walk before me up the path,
let me know the land the way you do,
each footstep an analytic tool.

(15 December 2010)

THREE EMPHASES

Enzymes of union
the *fermentation*
of the space between.

Lewd alchemy.
People will talk—
aboriginal energies
link leftwards

the Opening Screw.
Enter *of your free will*
negotiate your fur-lined closet,
sell me your shadow.

There: that's what I've been wanting
all along, that your body
live up to your mind
in *comely musculature*
give to me and each
vagrant potency
resemble every other
till all are matched in flesh
articulate angelhood.

16 December 2010

DOMESTIC ANIMAL

A.

The bark of your samoyede
prowls through my sleeptime.

Who would embed you
must bear the growl,

tundra jabber

in its stained teeth—

what

do those dogs eat?

B.

Relax, let me tell you,
we're safe beneath the quilt,

it's just a noise, a coarse

biology that lives in me.

A.

But not me. I alchemize
anxiety, I am bitten

to the bone

by the sound of it alone.

Why is a dog?

B.

To know me is to be with it
because my love is general
and every animal is a piece of me—
God grant the difference!
I want it lovely as I think.

16 December 2010

MORTALITY ODES

1.

I am the X-ray of a dead man's skull
or once on Tamalpais found
a deer's jawbone, left mandible of it,
the girl was naked though
and we shared the bone.

2.

How much of what is left of me
is what I meant?
Or all the meaning gone
wherever sense and yearning go
and left behind this
dry bone or this
cracked urn I guess is me?

3.

It is sixteen-something on a field in Norfolk
it is cold and quaggy and almost dark.
Time is its own archeology.
I stumble over something and lightly fall.
What I tripped on is my father's skull.
I brush my knees off while he talks to me—

Oh the bones are living
but their man is dead,
I stagger homeward
though four centuries
to reach this wooden armchair
in winter sunlight warm.

4.

And that is all that happens!
How hard it is to be now
among all those women!

This is a book, remember,
a living bone,
a sepulture that speaks.

16 December 2010

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The spiritual connection
might be a horse or a cat
or a finch ever yammering
in a cage offstage

we hear it we hear it
I have seen you walking
and sitting still your body
is a dream

precisely made
of dream matter
eloquent and mysterious
ungraspable dream.

17 December 2010

= = = = =

Make the numbers big on the wall
so we can't count the grains of daylight left
before the music comes
and the sky happens to us

one last time, the way you dreaded it
in the dentist's chair under the big window
the way you begged for it to come
in the hot dark under the so-called comforter.

17 December 2010

= = = = =

Waiting under the awning and
the closed car carrying sheep
the Brooklyn days the semaphore
telling trolleycars to smoke
belaboring the obvious one whole life
he got to heaven it was precisely
the way that he imagined it
and not one glory more the book
they made him read constrained him.
Every book is a trap.

18 December 2010

= = = = =

The moral and the mammary
should never be at odds.
Both should welcome acts of love
but keep them far apart.

18.XII.10

A CHRISTMAS CARD FOR HEATHENS

reminds that Jesus was a Jew
and Jews were all Egyptian once
and Egypt came up from Afrika—

paganism is always in peril
of some big idea
that swamps it with raiment
dynastic and dignified and dangerous,
fatwas from the Vatican, martyr at the stake—

*O precious is a Pagan heart
with room for every goddess
and love for every beast and boulder
and no rules except the real.*

18 December 2010

= = = = =

Come calling come be closer
there's nobody here
but me and the sun

you can do everything now
you always wanted
you can even ride my lion—

somehow without trying
I have a big calm lion in my house
go find him if you like

he's in one of my rooms.

18 December 2010

= = = = =

Sensualist rehearsal
hang the mistletoe
from your eyebrows
serve wassail
from your lap

or in another gender
walking towards it
with a blindfold on
the pressure on your lids
makes stars appear

horoscope me with them
till I am born
inside you for a change
paperclip heart
to hold in so wild wind.

(18 December 2010)

THE PHYSICS OF IT

You're the only one I'd let do it
because the balance of forces between us
immense flux of energy the intermagma
gives as much as gets, we each
increase and nothing lost, we flow
into each other in equal measure,
halte Maaß ! we hold the measure

whereas all others are too weak, swallow
my power into their audient void inside,
most people are built out of waiting alone
but we are built a quarter-hour ahead of time,
we are built of now and onward, are built
of saying and doing and making things be so.

18 December 2010

= = = = =

all of it turns

it breaks its wheel

there is a dark kind of pirouette

that words know how to know

18 December 2010

VARIATION

We keep coming closer to the other
side of time, where the albatross unharmed
soared out of sight and the clouds curvetted
into slow horizons and no one died.

The journey is continuous, is us
in fact, we sail seas of pure forgiveness,
trouble in our sleep but peaceful wakings.
Yet I keep looking over my shoulder.

19 December 2010

= = = = =

It wasn't the oxen, the cow and the asses
that stood respectfully behind the crib
where the newborn was probably asleep,
it was the four horses of the Apocalypse
waiting for their riders. It wasn't the sheep
who kneeled before the crib, nibbling
sometimes idly at the hay around him.
It was a dream of wolves resting in disguise,
anxious to wake up for the chase,
capture, taste, devour. It wasn't Joseph
who knelt there, it was Lazarus, still young,
half-drunk with sleepiness, but he knew
something important had to do with this,
keeping vigil with this newborn kid. And she
who knelt there on the other side
was the other Mary, the one from Migdala
of the towers, hauntress of shadows
and queen of arches. They were all here.
And Satan perched on the roofbeam of the stable
twanging his Babylonian mandolin
to keep the timid angels far away.
For this was time. This is world. This is time
and into it the child had chosen to come down
and time had come to meet him with its own,
the killers and the harlots, the aggrieved

and the repentant. For their sake he had come
and here they are. How anxious
the vigil that they keep! No vestals,
no saints could be so tender by his sleep.

19 December 2010

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One Christmas day in the woods
we found a patch where snow had melted
and in it a periwinkle the mild day had bloomed.

There it was, flower blue as October skies,
leaves green as next June. He had come
into time and time was changed.

19 December 2010