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NATIVITY SCENE

Cantilevered love affair
I found your whisker in my chowder—
milk that for innuendo
the nudes of Stockholm eager for Yule
because no religion will ever dim
the spark of northern skin
or so the advertisements read
for scotch or gin or what you will
there are diamonds in your watches
and watches on your wrist
your wrist on the table a fish on the plate
now you're getting warmer
it has to be a glossy magazine
before the photographs make sense
where we can tell which one is falling
and guess the species of the trees below
are its leafy boughs stalwart enough
to break his fall but not break him?
A man falling out of the air. Correct.
And so it is with angels and archangels
chuting down by day by night
shouting the carol of machinery
industrial rivers sound of shoes
smell of lesser affluents in Dedham
they come down to cheer us up

is that what your new book explains
how shiny voices with no hips
can give us birth again, Messiah?
what kind of answer can weather give
it didn't rain and they said it would
in these dark winter mornings she
has eyes in her fingers, eyes
in her hair, she sees, she speaks
a tongue the pine tree understands
this voluntary nubile alderwoman
addresses the captured soldiers
songs they're too sleepy to translate
they're out of ham but drank their fill
what does orpiment have to do with this
or sapphire or urban morals
so many words, how strong the roots
of feeble plants, why so few
women on the syndrome scale
the ink runs down her leg she cares
someone is writing my skin
won't stop till the world itself
is covered with the words it says
until you turn into yourself
Tom sent a picture of a badger
beside a photo of a burning man
made me think of Irish massacres
many animals died to make me strong

the slimy proteins of our cookouts
keep it civil Tiny the mill's wheel
can't keep up with the mill stream
and the miller's daughter white as snow
her color comes off in my arms
and under her skin the same as me
but under the coverlet difference bawls
the cheapest species of pastourelle
asphalt doctrine in the marble mind
little crossbills with scarlet flanks
the shocking fact of anybody else!
why do they shout things from the sky
isn't this the time of year to get born
and Persian philosophers come to town
bearing peculiar theories from afar
but lay down at his feet at last
a silvergilt aporia, and a sky blue
contradiction for his mother
her nose already back in that book
she reads that brought her here
where straw hisses with baby piss
and why not, am I not also a man
a brother a sister a bird on the roof
and I was born for this and a bull
snorts outside in the darkness
I am my master and I sleep.

16 December 2012

= = = = =

It is of course the way things run
east to west and flight attendants
cruise the narrow aisle Look
not at me but out the starboard
window gents and see the Northern
Lights, that's Michigan down there
the primary shield of planet Earth
if anybody cares. I crossed it once
on ordinary round wheels a place
where Jesus is much spoken of
and ravines full of vegetation cut
through the arid ground and I
or rather we because I'm never alone
are minor miracles ourselves Amen
but kept going, a sound with shape
eventually everything arrives at the sea
so each wave can say Say no more.

16 December 2012

= = = = =

Never far from mind
back of the mind
close to the tip of the tongue

to you the necessity!
out there in the hearing!

Imagine the brain
imagine is has something
to do with thinking

we only know
when it's speaking

or not but how
we'll never know

who's speaking
in there, neurons
of the néant

or is there Another?

16 December 2012

= = = = =

Pat the sink dry
steel or stone
sees better then

you become invisible
again your clean hands
leave no history

people looking for God
will be clas to find
the cloth you wiped the sink with.

17 December 2012

=====

It rained in the night it isn't raining now
call this a history lesson wet streets
probability theory and human witness

what else can we learn where rain came from
and why it fell and why we want to know
and all our answers are evasions.

17 December 2012

= = = = =

Who deserves to hear from me
whom do I deserve to address
if every word cost a dollar
how many would I write

and who would pay
the phone rings
it is a kind of money
valuta from the future

energy comes from looking
out the window
the soul takes birth
from watching people pass.

17 December 2012

TREE TALK

Let the words
come round my tree
to tinsel my fading green

and I'll stand still
all made of wood
in the corner of that room

all warm you keep
in the your brain, yes,
you, principessa

maculate, ocelot-pelted
with twigs in your hair
my Muse

everything's
persuasive argument
and ancient plot of daylight

to unmask my silences
no need to make decisions
trees are good at that

they decide where to stand
and stand there all their lives
no wonder our blue ancestors

worshipped trees and some
still do.

Come, I will drape

yew boughs with bright red
berries, toxic, beautiful
all over the rustic archway

I worked from bentwood
with its deep-carved motto
All ills heal here

and we will walk inside
together, come let us borrow
money from one another

till all of us are rich
and the birds that stay all winter
will love us truly for strewing

cracked corn on the snow.

17 December 2012

AMOR FATI

1.

Woodpecker policies
rain in your coat
beseech the sympathies
arrested in mid-flight
an arrow fleeing from
the bow as this hand
flees from what it writes.

2.

Cambium for one
or how 'tree'
came to mean everyone.

Trees

are all that's left
of someone's dream.

3.

Named for the King of Prussia
he grew intolerant
of all ideas but one
all ideas come again
and those are mad to whom they come.

Buried in a Protestant churchyard
like Wittgenstein. I don't know
where the king is buried.

He'll tell
you when he comes again. Delight
in this commitment. Do
only what you want to do again.

4.

So hell is not different
not so different from what happens

hell is what happens
the afterlife has empty streets

glistening with rain beneath
bare elm trees and dark pines

the afterlife is a Thursday afternoon
nothing finished nothing begun.

18 December 2012

= = = = =

The sky left alone
wants to be blue.
We are clouds
to one another.
No wonder I
love Irish weather.

18 December 2012

= = = = =

You think it happened before
it never did
it's not even happening now

and there is only now
ever and ever again
and never before

the world jas just now
this minute begun
and all our memories are false

hasty inferences
from what we find
all around us

stumbling as we *now*.

18 December 2012

= = = = =

Pale cars dissolve distances
the map unfolds by itself
bird shadows passing over it
tell you where to go

go. miracles are still possible
as in the days of the apostles
you can leave here and he
some other place, time

can pass while you think
a single thought
or what is that thing
going on right now in

your head while I'm speaking?

18 December 201

= = = = =

Looking out the window
and wondering
about the yellow flowers

is not so different
from thinking about you
and worrying about the yellow flowers

because when it comes down to it
I never really have brought you any flowers
do you even like flowers

yellow flowers?
why are there flowers
so many white and red

and so few blue
flowers I love them best
hydrangeas like summer skies

and there are even a few
flowers that are green
(leaves of poinsettia

but their bracts are scarlet,

why is anything the color
that it shows

is that what I should be
thinking about
instead of thinking about you

thinking about how few green flowers
there are in the world a
nd how many yellow flowers

there are in the world and how many
red and white flowers there are in the world
and how few blue

instead of thinking about yellow flowers.
Anybody can think about somebody else.
It's harder to think about yellow flowers.

The world is full of them —
chrysanthemums, lilies, daisies,
daffodils. The asphodel

of the ancients repronounced
by the Dutch, a land
full of butter and yellow cheeses.

18 December 2012 (oral)

OBSIDIAN

blade or fish a sharp
swims through
meat or bread

cuts in the dance
of the molecular
with crystal structure
of its own

carbon of steel or
glass amorphous

from the volcano.

The edge of recency
cuts through time

2.

In the thangka Mila
Repa is shown with hand
cupping ear. A poet
listens when no one speaks.

3.

I'm getting ready to do
everything else.

Already
the anxiety is lessening.
Lessoning: we learn
from terror to sit still.

19 December 2012

= = = = =

How strange, a bright
blue car—who
do they think they are?

A new flower?

19.XII.12