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Every qualm to be
new or be true to,
the breath rests.

Long tube of the shawm,
the chalumeau, quests
then quiets.

The dark seeps in
from the gently rounded lips.

Where the dark touches
the monk's lips
he plays again.

This has been going on
for centuries, a score of them—
eventually everyone
will get to hear it,
kairos,

**the appointed time,
gentle snarl of the gyaling,
kiss-purr of the bassoon.**

15 December 2013

=====

**At the foot of the mountain
ordinary things**

**they need
to be me.**

**Otherwise the mountain takes
into its silence**

**I stand between
the things that made us
and the things we make.**

15 December 2013

=====

**Do I have to know
the things I say
or is it just enough
to say them and let
another mean them,**

**that Other, maybe,
Dante hears them
talk of down below**

**(the long below,
don't call it hell,
Hell like Hades
is a person's name,
Hel was a woman
Hades a man
but neither ruled
where Dante went)**

**or said he went
all ears and eyes
attending the excuses
that eased the sufferings
of those who live in that place**

**where he heard them speak
this or that happened
as pleased Another
which is as close as in their pain
they could come to saying who.**

**So one speaks and another listens
and between the both a thing gets said.**

16 December 2013

=====

**Ice at shore midchannel free
who knows what year it is
or who is that Druid
asking which way this river flows?**

**Water is made of numbers—
when the population grows too great
the land turns into the sea
and we begin again.**

**Lamarck was right
but about the social body—
acquired traits do pass
to the next generation,
DNA of cash, DNA of poverty,
their four amino acids:
Debt Interest Ownership Sale**

and if you listen to the pack ice

grinding on the river

you'll hear the voice

o father

do not sell our house.

16 December 2013

Amtrak

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

**The Christmas tree is at its best
before you put the baubles on.
It says what it means by being
there and being green. No tinsel,
no fragile shiny balls, no candy cane.**

**No star. Just a tree in the living room.
A tree in the house. The world
is in you and you are in the world.
Impossible intimacy between
every single thing and you.**

**Here it is, eight feet of shapely
and when you touch it needles
are soft moist on your fingertips
for a while. By Twelfth Night
are dry, shed all over the floor.
Time has passed. Time is also alive**

before you bring it into the warmth.

**Epiphany they call that day, when
something inconceivable happened
right in your house. Just like every day.**

17 December 2013

=====

Something else.

Something politics.

A round of beads

slipping through the fingers,

amber, old Greek businessmen

from the islands, fiddling

with their *kombaloia*,

saying the prayer of silence

our bones know so well.

They sit at seaside

watching the waves

come in and never stay,

watching, watching nothing.

17 December 2013

=====

**Words away
the link
is light alone.**

17.XII.13

WINTERWORRY

A.

**But isn't this what im supposed to do,
these poems, plays, statements, books?**

B.

Depends on who's doing the supposing.

A.

**Suppose I didn't,
suppose there's something
else I ought to do.**

B.

Same answer:

Who's supposing?

Whose ought-ing?

A.

**You answer all my poignant questions
with snarky questions right back at me.**

B.

At least I answer.

17 December 2013

**Examine or hold fire
but not in your hands**

**there is a flower
needs you**

**it means you too
to attend**

**the college of its corolla
graduate faculty of the stamens**

**all the gaudy petals
to confuse you into clarity**

**your own
your own house.**

17 December 2013 (27.IX.13)

ORPHAN

Start again

be anonymous

the words you speak

are your mother

you have no other.

17 December 2013 (27.IX.13)

=====

**Part it to me afresh
lives in a cold room
the snow misspelling everything
out there to be beautiful,**

**I am allowed for one
moment to judge and praise.
Criterion. Men in white
collars presuming to decide.
Museum-keepers, fancy-men
on Babel blogs, mes frères.
I will curate the weather
and no one be the wiser.**

18 December 2013.

=====

**There is no unicursal hexagram.
It takes two to make it happen,
this crystal, this reality.**

**One triangle needs a man wise as Solomon
any woman that all
knows how to make the other.**

18 December 2013.

=====

**By the end of the century
every noun and every adjective
will be trademarked
for some process or device.
Then we're back to Latin
the weeping queen,
and Arthur come again.**

18 December 2013.

THE CLOUD

**I think my true love is.
ever-changing, ever
saying, always itself.**

**It goes everywhere, sees
us all. Can't tell one
cloud from another,
all one humidity, so many
exhibitions of shape, play.**

**This cloud is our minds,
a heap of white,
slow, unstable, one
smile aloft.**

**When this cloud turns up
it means you must
take care of everything,**

**herd all your cats,
dot all your i's,
sign all your letters
to the newspaper,
and you, are you even
the same as you were yesterday?**

19 December 2013

THE TABLE

Is made of trees.

Oak legs and maple top.

The sliding drawer is pine.

On it sits the Easter

ham, Christmas goose,

Thanksgiving tofu turkey,

the roast beef to celebrate

new job. New house.

On the table the novelist

scribbles the chapter, the girl

does her calculus.

The lawyer spreads out the will.

Everybody listens

when a table talks.

And it's all in the trees

to begin with, they

**deep rooted in the earth
know about everything
and the birds tell them more.**

**The drunk man
sprawls on the table,
with unfocused lips**

**Kisses the wood,
mother, he sobs.**

**And the cook messes
with the maid on it,
the kids play checkers
ahundred years go by,
they play Monopoly
pinochle, and die.**

**What the trees don't know
the birds make up for,
they know all the rest,
there is no room
for tables in the sky.**

I spread the mail out

**on the wood,
don't bother opening,
sit there and cry.**

19 December 2013