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Cellphone in the graveyard

Among all these stones
Half of them with names I knew
When they walked around
I'm the only one speaking

The neighborhood is spring
With them and the earth
Half-relenting so I thought
I saw a blue thing coming

Up out of the periwinkle leaves
And that must be wrong,
This is no place for easy whimsy
Or hopeful guesswork

I am talking to my love
Via a gizmo in my fingers
But she is I think
Not the only one listening.

17 February 2012

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Heading where
Or will there be
Choices to be made
But not by me

I'm Mr Libra
And can't decide
Sea or mountain
Le rouge ou le noir

I lie back in sunshine
And let it say what it pleases
I ride the shadows
Back into silence

Where you also are.

17 February 2012

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Suppose it were after all December and what then?
The birds are winterbirds still and suffer much
But never so cold this year yet that crows
Would topple frozen from their branch—we've seen
That in past winters in the long alas of time—
But it's halfway to March and who knows where
The sun is coming from, *the sky relents* is just
More poesy, mere poesy, nothing to do with is.
Love. Means last year's leaves still brown on the oak.

17 February 2012

NATHLIE 12-04 (1/5/2012)

What if the flute were the size of a hill
or the oak tree had Pythagorean holes bored in
and the wind blew through?

The problem
is Hopi, or as they used to say Moqui,
we are all fluteplayers
we all make the world go round,

we use sound to shape—
and the rabbis told us when in this world or the next
the Temple is finally rebuilt
it will not be made of stone and brick and gold

but of sound, sound alone,
and we will move in the chambers of melody
and song will hold us in its arms.

Because just as black holds all colors
so sound holds every silence
and there are so many kinds
of keeping still

and stillness keeping us
and silence has no many hands.

So read my palm
you'll find yourself there
this line is your spine
and this faint braiding
is your mother's hair
and this star here
is this very moment
when you think im talking
to you but really
the silence surrounds us.

(17 February 2012)

VARIATIONS

A house

things come around a house

a ram's horn

give me your mother

I want her to be my brother

a finger

inside one another

terror of sound

a sound that sounds like

something someone said

long long ago or just now

terrifying

the sound of same

your mother and I give each other

pieces of wood

that were not ours to give

but we stood

on them anyhow

platforms of beautiful disorder
afraid to touch
or each other

wooden planets in a wooden sky

the best thing is when
each piece of wood
knocks or cracks
against each other
the sound of wood

because wood is alive
and the sound is what a life makes
the crack of life

the sound
of wood has been
with us from the beginning

we are wood too

we were born before our mothers

that's what you see in a mother's eye
they beg forgiveness that they came
so late

through the trees

stepping

towards us

to save us

so young so dark we were

so old we were when we were born

we are wood

we turn or are turned or made

into whatever is needed

in her world

whatever she needs

all our lives we make what mothers need

no wonder they ask forgiveness

so young they always are as we get old

I heard pieces of wood clacking

I saw houses and mailboxes rushing by

I heard the ram's horn

howling in the sky

a strange sound

inside a piece of wood

lonely sound
running along a road
did you ever run
alone or with others

run along the sound

sometimes I think
a sound's our only street

a horn calling
over the roof of a house

everything is wood

everything is horn
when I was a kid I had a rosary
the beads were grey and made of horn

soft clatter of them
moved through my fingers
I call back the feel

soft horn
the call of wood

listen listen
the sound of
horn and wood
are the only natural things

everything that is alive
is sound
everything is sound

a person I know is the things she does

who made your wood

we live in sound

sawdust in your hair
working all day in wood
ant on your left wrist

we walk in the world

picnic taste of rain on wood

the wood is spilt milk

late winter blue sky
one white tree

the different sounds of same
are all I had to give you
because I had no wood to offer
no mother

as they call the thick phlegmy
almost sweet bottom of the bottle
vinegar

and I tried to map them for you
the shadows moving so across the lawn
as I sit at the window, sit too long
not wanting anything but to watch

watch the day happening

share it with you
a round dance
with no body moving

only the grain of wood
action at a distance
firm touch of nobody's hand.

18 February 2012

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How old everything is
find the common denominator
multiply by oak
and here we are
ancient Druids in new bodies
soft as shadow
loyal as some word you've always known

getting ready for my next migration
a silver cup
mildly poisonous mistletoe
a word once spoken never stops
a silver paten to rest the bread on
coarse scarce-risen barley bread
o god give me something to eat

i want to stand where no one stands
and that's what the trees are for
those quiet impersonators of an elder race
left as words for us to go on reading
as long as light and shadow last

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ATELIER

locked in with my old paints
my tired brushes crumbly charcoal
the changing light the dusty window
getting older and older

but the model sprawling
smiling on the ratty divan
is young as ever color of peony
the look of her makes me go on and on.

18 February 2012

LETTER TO THE LEFT OF YOU

the clinamen

catastrophe curve

to edge in

the edge of in.

Purify my resolve

a gilt brass baldachin

above my empty altar, o

only you can know this

for a long song

these curt syllables

shaped by yours

and the heart leads there too

the haver,

the grain of habit

and the four gates of one city

the moon sets at te end

of every street

white face at every gate

as the night walks
and the city turns.

So many animals
waiting for love

and the only think you can say
is blue blue blue.

18 February 2012

[end of Notebook 341]

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The call of the camel
a loud rude bray
I've heard
across an *undisclosed*
sensorium
is not likely
to be heard outside my house
at least not before
the eve of my death when
the black camel kneels at the gate
as it says in Charlie Chan,

yet strange things do get seen
sometimes, as when
some time in the early 1950s
the painter Amy Goldin
driving alone through upstate New York
passed a solitary
elephant (*Elephas indica*)
trudging along the highway

just as a few years later
at a gas station on another highway
in Illinois (Christ,
we are rife with roads

and crazed with going)
she heard some Slavic women
shout when their little pet
parakeet zipped out of the car
when one of the ladies incautiously
got out to get to the toilet
“Caught him! Caught him,
he couldn’t flew!” thus making
clear to me the real character
of the Russian verb system
with its distinction between
perfective and imperfective
aspects as the bird flew away.

19 February 2012

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When you're lazy
lean on the mirror.

Nothing is finished
nothing has to be

sunlight is a downpour of permissions
cats in cabaret on Paris TV

the French are a watching sort of people
and without judgment, judgment

they leave to the English
and remorse to the Americans.

And I alone am escaped to tell you.

19 February 2012

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How many doors
are there in it?

Of it Keats meant
words are ore
where does the smelting happen
in the heart or in the head
long after the poet
has come down from the peak
and sits by the fire with his cat—

darling you are a house
with a thousand windows and one door

things go too fast around corners
things swerve
but things survive

then the mind is made up

Now we can begin to count

the mind is not even itself

so I meant to clean

the Augean stables = cleanse
the mind of habitual fixations

only the hero can

change the analysis of every situation
so it's not sex or power or politics
you read from what goes on in front of you
or behind your eyes

you read a different thing—
that glory book with empty pages—
suddenly sleep wakes up in you
the *right time* is the only time there is

or I could see a pretty little thing
a yellow flower in four lines
or an auk on an ice floe
a child weeps for what he'll never see.

19 February 2012