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Armaments are plastic men oneiric
their glimpse all gone in Darkady
because wolfram's missing from the lamp
Magyar customs sound of a wheeze
Lydian manners hands around slim hips
breeze music mannerist limestone muntins
listen hard manwit a white lung
after all a sextant in a windowsill
we see at last what who means. Licitly.
That's what's civil. Jog memoria
through the once streets the dead Dutch
there was no time for wandering
a street means straight, money needs us
our vacations are in heaven
gravestone grievances announce whose hell
this door bangs open to, dogless in comfort
small fire in a big hearth: that's a citizen for you
I rave against the patience of things, I was a child
ere long and too long continued such. Film
of my unspooling. Mother clutch and Daddy shy
but I could whistle like a fairy at a keyhole
it's not an easy thing I tell, money's in it
and the sounds of battle off and now and then the dead
soldiers or raped citizens slouch in what do I do
with the heat hat on my heart this language

I want to doff and growl and sob beside them
but not to be them, no, I am afraid to touch.
Thus he spoke at the breach of the oldest wall
fishing for platitudes to amend the silent eyes
studious in locative confusion, are you not
your father's son your mother's misery are you not
the blood I witnessed on the bad man's sword
the child crushed in his video as if the actual around him
were mere misprision of the real? I read my book
I accept the given Otherwise words present me,
I turn your page. Gladsome aquafont, stone,
there is no need for ships we walk the salt
cubic molecule by molecule we understand the sea
but never once get wet except in dreams.
Yours was *the blue light of other people*
waiting for you outside your busy kissing
or what to do when night is spent away
you bend low to the pillow's ear and say
o how I love thee and it all is true and
all this Iliad is just lovestuff where men die
and women watch all from the Seeing Gates aloft
aloft as if this life of yours you never needed.
Thus he spoke and Leda's daughter groaned
as if surfeited with caresses, Overmeasure
is all I ever asked for, starlight only at the end
of Apollo's circumstance his priest explained
and those far shimmers are Apollo too

for gods are mainly made of eyes. Eyes and arms
and thighs around you, and so those burning gasses
you see above you work up our passions
into raging episodes of what we think we mean
but morning finds another lover in the bed
a wounded sparrow on this girl's window ledge.
Thunder in winter lovelier far nor war.
A siren on the other side of the forest threshold
who is in trouble who is on fire every branch
rimed with ice, I borrow a word from my sister
cat to tell this strife from which we die and live
a war is never ended as it seems but I know better
portolan energies break the boats' bones
to get there you have to come back chafed
with all the sitting to the horse or beast afar
one hero came riding on a lioness, crows
celebrate the morning again, hard to fight
in the dark this long grooved ice day going on
while there's light see love in your enemy's eyes.

19 January 2011

JÄNNERZETTEL

Now listen to my silence
and be glad

One of these days
I might even be born

Her smile inhabits me

Troma are the tubers of silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*)

Yar-tsa gun-bu = 'summer a grass, winter a worm' = *Cordyceps*

Wild geese fly out of her face
her eyes
show their cry.

We know the gender of a face
but color is the gender of the eye.

gathered 19 January 2011

THE PROCESS

Or I am a train
dozen coaches and Pullmans
full of people going here and there

but always where I'm going and I go
I never stop never at any
of all these tawdry stations

never have I seen a station
call me to stop. My passengers
are calm, reading, gazing,

making love awkwardly in sleepers.
They're waiting for the right
station too, they don't worry much,

watch the rivers and mountains,
I never stop, sometimes
one of my people goes crazy,

wants to get off, there is no off,
and I'll never stop, never
till the right station finally comes.

19 January 2011

THE WORDS ON THE DOOR

wanted more. A signature,
a pawprint, or a red
other outline of a hand.

A man. All they said
was what I read.

Just me and the sign
alone. It could
go anywhere, a door.

The words might show
where the door goes.

Or the words might
not even know.

I say a word
is a simple thing
how much can it know
of what it means,
and even so

the words say less
than they know.

They are there
between me and the wood
of a door, the door
between me and what?

A word is what

I am afraid to open,
what if it led
to a world
I didn't know
and couldn't understand,
couldn't even speak?
What would that say about me
and where I am standing now
staring at words on a door?
Am I anywhere at all?
Does a word banish
the one who reads it
to its own abstract space
halfway between a sound
coming out of a warm mouth
and a thing? Can a word
also think? Am I between,
just something between?
Unsigned words
sign on the door. I no
longer know it's a door
for sure, it may
be just a word
to put words on
where there is no one
saying them, words
on their own

and the wood
does not know
how to open.
They rise before me
I feel myself cringing
at what they might mean,
a door is foreknowledge,
a piece of wood
opens in the middle of things,
any word is a prophecy,
there is a power somewhere
knows what they mean.
What language they come from
to be here. Nothing else
but the words in front of me.
Maybe these are the words
no one ever spoke,
orphan words that need me
to be their father.
To pronounce them.
To open the door.

20 January 2011

CHANTS

What are chants

chants are obsessions

we hear the wail of wall

the *would* of wood

the ire of desire.

Chants happen inside all the
time sometimes lets them fall
call

out into the easy

—starlets eyeful banjos know—

or be a black

bird on snow

much-knowing crow.

Align

with curtained matter

tear the cloth

show your past

the innocent beforeness

when memory wasn't

(I think the skin)

and no voice called

you out and all was in

and all you heard
was what the blood said
to the ears what the belly
rumbled

(there
the dragon lives, the Great
Intestine swallows all
and there the flowers of the interior
blossom and heal)

(I think
the cave songs said)
(the hands also knew

and a hand needs a wall
to speak

everywhere we look for
and everywhere find
a cave wall to write on
or a wall to read)

tear the cloth
and let the light
pour from inside out
(I think the skin

is my self

before I could speak)

(the skin sees
the skin hear)

rip the water

let the earth out

tear the earth

to let the fire

come out and speak

(we live inside

by oxygen not air)

so rare the air

rarest of all

the last and greatest

of the Four

the one closest

to the Light

atmosphere

the greatest sphere

sephira

what we hear

we hear by air alone

and only the air remembers

what we were before

before we forgot

(did you forget you forgot?)

21 January 2011

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“Is anyone in my dream ever not me?”

—Alana

I think that everybody in the dream is you
but what are you but an assemblage of all the me's
that ever were or could be, some in red dresses
some in tall hats. Maybe we lie entranced
dreaming each other into place, and lo!
we wake up and someone is there
who did not exist before we dreamed
but who is solid now, alive with a vast history
created in this moment. How do we know?
You said that all the people in the dream were you.
But what about the rhinoceros you didnt see.
the one tearing up the street outside I saw
while you were busy seeing human beings.
What about the paleskin fairy perched
in the wet madrone tree while you stroked
the wound of the wet bark? What about the wound
you didnt notice, how it traveled from
my forehead to your back? The wound you healed
became your own. That's why the goosebumps,
new flesh and not old blood. What about
the cellars deep below your little house,

level after level of them down to where
the spiderwoman spins the cloth we wear for skin?
Are you that being too? Are we just cameras
that go off at night and fix us images
we have to live with all the next day
or ever after, or a year and a day
until that image fades and the empty dream
is ravenous with hunger, can't wait
for you and me and all of us to sleep again?

21 January 2011

LINE CHANT

Line is a mind
balances a hole
everything's in it
it is desperate
he said a long
line ago how
long a line is
a line is the shortest
possible distance
between two
silences
 it has all
of me in it
with room for you
too a line
is liberty
a line reminds
a line across a stream
in springtime
tug-of-war
between two
drunken silences
try to pull
the far silence in

silence in wet cotton
suddenly the line
shivers in you
are you in the stream
the sudden baptism
of hearing something
yet or are you dry
are you on the side
of the trees or the birds?
They sit on any line
above the road
a line sees everything
or hidden in branches
among the new flags
of spring's rebellion
a line is battle
a line works hard
against the old
a line cuts through stone
a line resounds
or minds
a line is absence
wreathed around flowers
a line alive alone
hurries to be gone
O hide me
in your silence

a line says
but whom
does a line
believe in long
enough to cry out
a line is both
directions at once
a line is a question
to its own answer
O line he cried out
O line that leaves me
how can I follow
you I follow you
you have no color
I can taste you in the dark.

22 January 2011

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But if they lived in the same house
there is reason. If they stepped
quietly up the same stairs
there is reason. If they looked shyly
mornings in the same mirror, reason.
If the roof over their heads
sometimes heard them talking or if
the floor beneath them shook
just faintly as they walked around
and the carpet accepted tiny dust motes
of dandruff and dry skin, theirs,
there is reason. There's always a reason.

22 January 2011

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Why does sadness make us cry?
I'm asking Darwin here,
not Tennyson. What deep
survival function do tears work,
washing the eyes of
someone sobbing alone in a dark room?

22 January 2011