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We celebrate our likeness to ourselves
we shatter mirrors we don't need glass
we all look alike the man across the road
has my face and the woman too
even the dogs look like us and the birds
talk better English every day.

1 July 2012

INDEPENDENCE DAY A-COMING

We fire rifles into the air
slaughter all that emptiness up there
but bullets cost money and guns even more
so we send cheap Chinese rockets up
explode cherry bombs and sparklers
to show the stupid world that we
make the light and we make thunder
it scares the crows and serves them right
they laugh at us all day long that black
snicker in the trees but it's we
who are the wonder race the exceptional
people the independent we need nobody
but ourselves we're all the same
and none of us need you whoever you are.

1 July 2012

=====

My dear crows busy up the road
rebuke my fearful cynicry—
sometimes I get sick of how American we are.

1.VII.12

= = = = =

The people who know me
are tired of being known.
I look for a stranger
who will let me explore
the cool skin of difference
and deep samenesses
it will not hurt any more than
morning sun blushing a cloud.

1 July 2012

=====

The long benefit of being no one
struck Odysseus a day or two after—
come to think of it, he could
be no one still. And at the end
of his life had to go to that place
where no one knew him. To
be no one s\lets you simply be.
Unpersuaded by your identity
that imaginary image you project,
protect, around the diamond-empty
core of being. The brightness.

1 July 212

CATENARY

It may be a matter of rapture
but it is matter.

I can't dance

my hands

will have to print responses

but that's what spines are for

phone lines slung across the lonely desert

full of news nobody but you can hear.

1 July 2012

= = = = =

How far will she run this
first jogger of the quiet morning
I think she's meeting Dante
down by the train tracks
to fill him with inspiration
grace of a fleeing woman
blonde as Genoa leaping
along the ordinary road
on the other side of heaven
to the place we don't know.
He must discover it. Already
we hear the diesel horn blow.

1 July 2012

IN MEMORY OF MEMORY

1.

It is a kind of dreamland after all
—remember Luna Park? the Dragon’s
Gorge, the Shoot-the-Chute and girl
squeal and hit the water—green
is the cave of love, green and going
deep in the dark—what serveth
memoria?—honor of agency
grandeur of just now—white cliffs
of the Vineyard and the Wampanoags
wont teach their language to any
outsider, bless them for their difference,
difference will save us yet—Gayhead
—Mandelstam’s prose keeps breaking
into gorgeous incoherence, poetry
is the point of it, “The Noise of Time”
he calls it—but memory is an epic poem
beginning in the middle of things
and going nowhere we can foretell
and we construct it for ourselves
we are all on our way back from Troy.

2.

Where does it live
he asked, this
memory?

The answer
is everywhere
or to be particular
right here.
Memory is the other stored in me.

3.

soft grey morning
in italics save
for hot sunlight
along the power lines
stretching east
phone call from the sun
announcing
what is to come
the end of remember.

1 July 2012

= = = = =

Habits break so easy
what do you do then
to find the cup
you just put down?
And how to open a door?
And where is that door
you walked through
ten thousand times?

1 July 2012

TINNITUS

Ring in your ears—
the phone no one can ever answer.
But you can guess who's calling.

1 July 2012

FEARE NO MORE

Not sure we can help it
this living in cold and heat
never-relenting aggression
of the atmosphere we breathe
we need. It is as if we
were engineered for a totally
different kind of weather
temperate stormless and our
eyes could see at night.
Immigrants all of us.
And who were the first
people here and where do
they linger? I think they walk
among us in the dark.

1 July 2012

RIVER SORROW

as mode music
hurries from the ear

heresy music

he who made it is the first to lose

flumen the flow the rushing

Brahmaputra

son of the sleeping god

whose dream we are

and who alone knows how to wake.

Flow.

Backwards into your chamber

where I begin.

Be much

by mode, be wet

by inclination.

Clinamen.

Falls of the Niagara

once you see them you're married,

this all is elegy,

between the great lakes a river

what is a river

a river is a swift or sluggish forgetting,

elegy about to resume
we stood
once in that church too
limiting
ourselves glad to what we heard

tried to hear.

Wavelets
lapping at the door.

The ocean
continues us.

1 July 2012

= = = = =

America is Florence is the renaissance
we are Italy full of Dantes always at war
we are exceptional we own technology
we despise the learned and the arts and sages
we lionize artists because they sell. We buy.
Everything turns into money and money
like matter (as Tomasso told us) never
can be destroyed, changes form changes
hands, everything is music anything is art
that can be sold no people in history
have ever seen so much or cared so little
under the three gold apples of the Medici.

2 July 2012

PROOFS

In what way is this today
prove it

or let the teacher fend
by learning
never stop

or always
have a word in your mouth
ready to declare

or green and soft
the morning here
no matter the later

the heat of the day.

2 July 2012

= = = = =

Pine cone
on my table
a promised
memory
love and
something more.

2 July 2012

RIVER SORROW (2)

Took no time to tell you
organized around

two swans in midriff
only a small river after
they settle where food are
they are grammarians, they remember Ibycus
(mentioned on tv last night and
in the Sunday *Times* Isocrates)

(3)

postcards often show the moon
half-naked people cathedrals
sunny beaches that always look the same

rivers running away from home

where we live

alone with our breakfasts
our twenty million cups of coffee at this hour
or in the cities stuffing danishes down
while the new sun illumines the catenaries
the powerlines that haul the sunlight in
and of such half-sensed metaphors also
love is made.

(4)

Squeeze the senator
mute erection
parliament of souls
howling over the ruins of the flesh

Sarah needs nothing too
not just a propagating ewe
I take her gently
from her clothes, lead
her from her tent
and let her say goodbye to Abraham.

In my arms the world turns round
the real meaning of the book spills out
like milk or wine or laughter in her lap.

(5)

Thus I refute
the patriarch I am.

I'm telling more these days.
In my youth it was not much more
than passionate mosaics of
what I found in books or dreamt or saw.
Now I take all that for granted

and just make my report. I am
almost anybody you ever knew.

(6)

Trees in the trees
things looking at me
and they have no eyes
so what they see
is the real me.

(7)

Once I knew and now I am
but the song's the same

river sorrow sorrow river
the song is one

everything changes
but there is no change

before you know it
you know it.

2 July 2012

