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Show off when you can
the rest is taxes—
you labor for the other
who pretends to be the self
the five or six Monday
mornings every week.

3 February 2010

= = = = =

In that society slaves are hypnotized from earliest childhood, and are programmed by hypnosis to believe that they are actually masters, and in charge of their own lives and destinies. They are made to believe that their slave labor is meaningful work they choose to do, and has dignity, and what is more, it is vital for achieving certain rewards they have been programmed to desire.

Occasionally, the program stops working in some individual slave, who wakes briefly, or intermittently, or, in rarest cases, completely and permanently out of the hypnotized condition. The awakened slave never feels the same way again – doesn't feel the way a slave is supposed to feel, and will henceforth always be a little out of sync with everybody else, and even the earlier sense of self.

Who knows what such an awakened one might say or do?

3 February 2010

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Seven minutes checking news and mail.

Letters that will not be answered.

Minutes that will not come again.

3.II.10

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Unstunned by snow
all birds know
what to do,
The three bodies of the Buddha.

3 February 2010

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So if it could walk
slow down and use legs
and give off less light
much less it could
move among us now
right now. When you see
one who makes you
look away, that's one.

3 February 2010

LAMMED VAVNIKS

If you think or suspect
you are one
of God's chosen ones
you're not.

*

If someone thinks you
and tells you so
the angels cover their eyes and weep.

*

But if you can't tell
one side of the street
from the other,
who knows who you might be?

3 February 2010

KNOSPE

Be wide open
the way a rose is
before it fades.

Or be tight
and bide your time
in hopes it might
be mine too,
and we.

3 February 2010

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I need just a few
more words from the sky
then I can stand
on earth itself
more or less intact.
A job to do. But which?
A word to say
but to whom?

3 February 2010

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Care for the next one in line.
She might have a word to say
or not. She may wake up
and find the house empty.
Dreams do that. Things go away
while you sleep. Or because.
And you think then that freedom
is just such an empty room.

3 February 2010

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They're all gone
over the hill.

Who?

The clouds,
the animals
even the light itself.

It is a privilege
to watch them go,
to be able to
and to stay.

3 February 2010

“CHIPPED TEETH REVEALED A DANCING BLACK TONGUE”

—answering a prompt by Hannah Rikoon

1.

I had never before been so close to a giraffe.
It wanted me, at least its tongue did,
curled out around the ice cream cone in my hand
and it was his. Or hers. I could never tell them apart
just from the tongue. So long and black.
Dangers of the Bronx. A tongue like licorice.

2.

So when she ate candy hers was that color too
though not so long and not solid black but
she could curl her tongue. Can you?
And suddenly I could. Now I was not just
a member of one gender moiety—I also
belonged to that group of humans who
could curl their tongues in the middle.
Lateral fold I guess they'd call it, not
sure whether they have it in giraffes.

3.

I see I've skipped the teeth.
I have a chipped incisor myself,
maybe I'm self-conscious about it
(why am I writing about it then?).
But my tongue is as crimson
as any ordinary man or woman's
although last Friday, in my office,
Marina brought me a handful of
that fantastic Dutch licorice called
drop—salty, not too sweet, so then
my tongue was black as your hat.
But (like Kierkegaard) it did not dance.

3 February 2010

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Language is a non-cognitive dismay
that hurts you right away—in the knees
in the hip (the side-meat of a human leg),
in the way your heart feels about your Aunt
Annie's bedroom with the huge crucifix
over her bed. Painted blood on painted skin
of a painted God. That's what language is.

3 February 2010, Olin

= = = = =

Going to the northern
water deep by the brick
church blue, canal
possessed by ducks
I am made of tile too
glazed by wizard time
I am settled by water
now I become a wall
I am red the wall
crumbles, parts of me
land in the canal I mean
I am made anyone is
made of history.

3 February 2010, Olin

MEN

We are so delicately poised on the earth
a puff of breath and we're blown away,
men, the way we stand, uneasy even
the best of us shuffling from paw to paw
our heads full of improbable desires
and unspeakable anxieties and blushing
to the roots of our scummy hair, men,
never clear enough, never here enough,
always afraid of being. Just being.
As if being alive is a weird accident
that happened to somebody else
who all too soon turned out to be me.

4 February 2010

MEN, 2

I'll tell you some things about men,
things they don't want you to know.

Or things they don't know that they know
about themselves until they get old

and then usually they forget. Life itself
is a system of forgetting.*

4 February 2010

* see *The Spiritual Eraser*, "diminishing sensation, perception and memories one by one until there are none."

= = = = =

There is no real world.

But what is here?

What is it

we accept in its place,

the ground, the as-if

that for so many

replaces the as-is?

(from an old notation)

unearth'd 4 February 2010

PLANCTUS

The privacy of complaint
spoilt by voicing,

when your complaining
becomes a public event

whose is the grief?

(from an old notation)

unearth'd 4 February 2010

A CHURCH

A church is the shape of God cast in mud
or cut in stone. The mud of Chumayo,
the host taste on the starveling tongue.

Anybody who wants to enter the church
needs to be naked, get dirty, get wet.
The soul hates to be wet—
but the soul needs to break its ancient habits.

The water of baptism scatters history.

(from an old notation)
unearth'd 4 February 2010