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POSSESSION

All things that belong to me
long to be.

Possess is somehow to confer
esse, being
on things apart as if it were
lifeless wood
till it becomes my door

or yours,
as if the tree's entity got lost
in lumber till
we take the wood into our souls
and share our entity with it

our dangerous ownership.

27 May 2010

{Note: Americans think that the more they have the more they are.}

THINKING

But why fuss with ideas
when I could be thinking?

Are words the faeces of thinking?
Or the prime material from which thinking comes?
Or both?

This is speaking alchemically.
This is not thinking.
Thinking is more like rain,

it happens to us by itself.

A word is an umbrella
that shelters us from what *we really mean*
that is, what the thinking in us (as us)
is really thinking.

Thinking has no product.
Thinking is hot lava pouring down the hill.
Speaking is trying to light a cigarette from the burning stream.

Dangerous, irreverent, sometimes catches fire.

27 May 2010

= = = = =

Something simpler than a brick—
unicellular animal
further than (closer than) God.
A geometer's imagined point.
The notional beginning of something
that for all you know has always existed.
The world. The world was created
this morning and we are equipped
with sudden imaginations (we call it
history) and believe in weird magic
(we call it causality). Nothing
is simple. A brick is just a breath
in the long life of clay. Wherever
I look I see someone looking back.

27 May 2010

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Waiting (wanting)
to know a little bit
more about you,
keep the blood moving,
the cryptic e-mail,
the lost garden.

How soft you
sometimes are,
bed in meadow,
ancient cities
thrive in your head,
watercourse with
willows, no harp,
only the wind
is music adequate,

am I warm yet
have I figured
out your in?
You laugh and leave me
wondering, the grammar
of our common tongue

defeats us most
when we try (I try)
to say something
new I keep touching
you I keep saying
is this really you?

27 May 2010

= = = = =

Over the morning
sweet smell of new-cut grass
and the hot oil reek
of the mower
that cuts it.
A cool breeze
all of a sudden,
a prophecy
of storm, of hail.

27 May 2010

= = = = =

People listen to a wall.

They have eyes but keep them closed.

The wall sounds like seashells, seas,
deep curved sugar bowls held to the ear.

Try it. There is a roar in the world
all such things know how to hear.

The wall knows too. So people
forget their own languages and listen to wall.

It is the sound of everything, I suppose,
so everything must be in it, perfectly clear.

27 May 2010

= = = = =

Have it come down to breakfast
let it roost on the ridgepole and shout
let it put it in black and white
let it be whatever it needs to be

grass or grout or tuba bellowing
parade of kilted waddlers anything,
anything. Seems to me these days
everything makes a lot of noise.

And as the sad saints say, only God is silent.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

New identities

made of polished brass.

Ashtrays full of coral beads—

you had a little altar once,

even you, holy things were on it,

you always wanted something just

an inch or two outside the actual,

the other side of ordinary,

no glass, no film, no distances at all.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

Why isn't the news real?

Why isn't there any place to go that isn't now?

There are offerings slung on all the branches
but who said that they're trees

and what do gods want or need with organ meat
and long intestines festooned in greenery

birds of prey yes but gods?

I say my prayers in Sumerian

sometimes I even pray to you
hoping you'll never find out that you're me

i.e., that you and I are the same person
randomly assigned to often differing bodies.

Only celibacy will help us now.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

As if there could really
be a taste left in those lips,
perfect lips in syenite or limestone
from an Egypt ago

her eyes are on the memory of it
was it oil or an almond,
was it a kiss she was trying
all too successfully to suppress?

The things that make us wonder
are little things,
 the intimate. almost unconscious caress
between an object and your skin,
for example,
what it felt like for her
to have something lifted to her mouth
and remember it 3000 years.

I reach up and touch the stone thigh,
trying to answer.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

I don't want to talk to you

I want to talk to your mouth

with your mouth even I

could say something finally true.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

Why does everything turn on hearing
as if from Rilke onwards
every question had to do with listening
and listening was our purest science now

as if somewhere were speaking?
Looking at a photo of some favelas
heaped up color by color against the hillside

or the huge garbage mountain in Richmond
with gulls patrolling it white white white
it seemed to him that everything
aspires to beauty,

 will tend in our slowest
hands and devious dreams to reach
that homoeostasis of light and form
we let ourselves call beautiful.

29 May 2010

= = = = =

Revarction and entrome—
we stirp for it, then gled.
We overmood it, spilth
of evening down us bird
by bird, then the trawm.
What do in dim? Men house
have hule banit, the habit
of troth alongs you soft
on the brath and we sid.
We go on sidding. Day
ferler than any far
until we know our keaves
and speak it clear can.

29 May 2010

= = = = =

Being near enough to things
to taste the shimmer of them and not touch—
for touch is science and possession
while the slim afreets of taste
angel the essences of things right to your core

where several of your souls do live—
Magic is where the world ends
and starts again, the world
changes its name to you
and you wake up then
dry-thighed from a tattered dream.

That was not thing.
This is thing,
now. Sun in tree.
The taste of sun.
One of your souls curled in your mouth
limp as a smile, still waiting.

30 May 2010

A CURVE OF CALLIGRAPHY

woman stretched out up the stairs
she is the ladder

Jacob climbs up the cloudy mezzanine
he keeps hearing voices come from there

he has to ascend
the geometry of her difference

fractals help him
the harbor close by the waves are still

there is terror in every going up
at the top of the ladder there may be no world

shelter needed from everything
it is a long time since anyone has looked down the well

out there in the courtyard
when he gets to the top she'll bring him water to drink.

30 May 2010

LEAF

Your leaf loves me
so that it knows
how to say the thing
you can't say

it lies along my lips
and lets me know it
front and back
I trace its veins

all the way back
to you, we flow
together in this green
manifesto who

decides what makes you
you what makes me me
and says what we don't dare

Listen it does say
you have licked
the skin of her mind
not even I have been
closer than that.

30 May 2010

= = = = =

As the house shades the lawn
long spring evenings
so his mind shades the woman,
shadows the figure of the woman where
in green dimness she endures
the sluggishness of his sciences.

30 May 2010

TIME AND WIND AND WATER

do most work.

The savvy foreigners we are
moved into such elemental
neighborhoods and took our ease,
eating this and spitting that
and tilling, tilling, till we got
such crops as suited the arcane
digestion we discovered in this place.
We are supposed to eat just light.

2.

But light is costly now
and not much taste—
the thrill of insertion small
and we are made of holes
our pleasure is to fill.

3.

Arcane. We still don't know how
it really works, turning cheese into Chaucer,
turning spring meadows into Messiaen.

And only a few of us – don't look at me –
know how this processing began
way back in the mind, or time,

when we fell on thing and became it.

4.
But let a new thing happen—
maybe the way a tree invented leaves
or geese wrote Greek on the archaic sky—

but something now, full of why and wistful,
something we could finally give each other
among the lusts and punishments and doubts

something carved out of our first light
but shaped by all the time we've shared
going nowhere quick into beauty.

5.
Now time.
Is it real.

Is it human.

Is it even the lady
cardinal at the feeder
one more image

to distract me from the question.
The question of time.

Why do we think of its as passing
when of all things it is the only one that stays?

31 May 2010

PHONOLOGY

This vowel usually occurs as long
but sometimes in liquid contexts as a breve,
thus *ūk*¹, *ūmjyt*², but *hǔβ*³
which in hurried speech can lose its rounding.

31 May 2010

¹ sparrow

² far away

³ woman's lap. (A man's lap is *ledž*.)

= = = = =

(Things that you worry about
and things that worry back—the difference

the latter are the ones you can't stop
thinking about. If you can call it thinking.

It's really them, worrying you with your own
equipment, your neurons and stored imagery.)

31 May 2010

JORDAN

A rock on a table
a cup and a pen.
Hallows. Of unhewn
stone this altar also.

31 May 2010

THROUGH SCHLIEREN OPTICS

The full fur of the trees.

The day. The need and the belonging.

Something to do with songbirds,
squirrels mumbling in the woods.

We pass through each other endlessly
seeking the boundaries of ourselves—
frontiers we carry with us, a veil
of self around us as we move—

warm, moist, they say, our own air.

31 May 2010

= = = = =

On the small ocean
a large ship.
A child drew this planet,
buried golden figurines of soldiers
deep under the hills.
We hear them fighting
sometimes when the wind
comes that way, it's all
they still know how to do.

31 May 2010