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MAY DAY

I think it was a heron I saw over
omen of the first thing seen outside
what the ancient Greeks called
I was just standing there and the road happened

and it spoke to me. Bird word
what kind what part of sky.
In the east, flying south, across the rising sun.

Now you know as much as I do
and the day begins. The lovely witches
what the ancient Catholics called saints
wake up in their holy pictures on the wall
their worshippers kiss the paintings
and the holy women step down into their caress—

that is the meaning of the Sabbat, the great one,
the H-less one, ends with a *teth* not a *tav*, a snake
not a cross, and then the morning comes.

Everything we have ever worshipped comes to us now
disguised as a round bright spot in cirrocumulus
lancing down through new leaves on the linden

if you happen to be here. And here
is very big. I see your face not mine
reflected in the coffee in my cup,
I study the back of my left hand
and see your veins embossed on it, not mine.

To wake so far from myself and everything else so close.
Or I am the last thing you remember before you sleep?

1 May 2010

= = = = =

Nothing says me of all this answer me
a cloud looms a tree looks
like an oak from far off one more old name
for this young thing the beautiful small
as with ice cream licked the pliant cup
I had wandered into your body now what next
how hard it is to silence all these words
and say just this, not above so not below
we turn out to be maps of one another
o bring the cushions out and sit down on the lawn
I say goodbye to all my other friends
you have such a simple name I can't believe.

1 May 2010

= = = = =

The moon was with the jackal last night
I dreamt about Eve
how she reached up so gently
and parted the robe of the holy tree
and without ever plucking it
kissed, nibbled the holy fruit.
No need for grabbing in the garden of love.
I think I'll make a man
of this experience she thought.
And then I woke, perhaps I am
the man she thought it will be.
The way we love each other
not really knowing which
of us is fruit and which is tree.
The jackal snickers the way they do:
you're just the busy shadows of such leaves.

1 May 2010



The Star of David is two
stars conjoined
through intercourse and algebra.
Two and not one—
no single line can draw their shape.
The Star of David means
I always need you.

1 May 2010

= = = = =

A tropic tarn a quick away from isles and
in hard continents a weather the density! the
density! squabble for light and upward even
merest trees Parmenides the trees we have been
looking for the turn of mind that no one spoke,
advantage silence, what country are you I am a rag
I belong to the wind.

1 May 2010

= = = = =

Always one thing or another having
spirit of the elevator
touch who dares
empty car rising through the planes
kabbalah of the mezzanine
pause here for a sort of oxygen
it runs your old books for you
pause here for hermeneutics
an old thing with a long beard
explains why you keep rising
the words are puzzling but you do.

1 May 2010

ARABESQUE

I would be as true as the Qur'an
as eternal as

a word is about the mouth
not what it says

not about time
a word is eternal

the word is always true
no matter what I tell you

the telling holds.

1 May 2010

Kingston

= = = = =

Ope'd a book
a star fell out
it was 1735
I was not nearly
born I fell back in
she closed the book
and wept a little
gazing out there
at the deer park
in the last light.

1 May 2010

Kingston

(allegretto)

When I was a child
fences still had stiles
and I could still
climb over them

all this is different now
but the green field still
for all our quickness
holds the fierce red bull.

1 May 2010

Kingston

BAPTIST CHAPEL

seascape of varnished wood

comfortable seats

a great eight-spoked wheel

holds the eight-light lantern up

above the chancel

architecture is God

trying to overhear what we mean.

1 May 2010

Kingston

Fauré's *Pelléas and Mélisande*

1.

Blue rehearsal

how could she go on living
knowing so little

I did when I was young
and was not even beautiful

except as all
young things are
shimmering with the soft
empty light of what's to come.

2.

One dies all the time
of the slightest reasons
Death only one of them

there are lilies
left from Easter
and girls all the time

how soon they vanish
church or school
compels them to grow old.

3.

In church, Fauré.
Not requiem, love.
Poetry, not pray.

1 May 2010

Kingston

ORCHESTRA

The strings
are almost always
better than
the other things.

1.V.10, Kingston

= = = = =

A woman or never.

One by one I seem

to recede them

new grammar

into the middle distance

where Maybe lives

and quiet No.

Being done with one

by one and still

be there for everyone.

No dinner parties

just howling from the hill.

1 May 2010

Kingston

Fauré: *la Mort de Mélisande*

and who is left
of all that love?
an old blind king
and all old men are blind

see only what they have seen,
blinded by images
reach out to caress
the young wife's body

growing cold beneath his hands.

1 May 2010

Kingston

Schumann: *Overture, Scherzo and Finale, Op.52*

In this music no one kneels down
it is a different religion

a stand-up gospel
we are healed by hearing

and in his day the trains
started to come in

faster and faster out of the station
reminding him that all music

is usually saying goodbye.

*

Later the Valkyries
would ride this train too

there is in music
a propulsion to depart

all tonal consolations

soon to be abandoned

leaving us with tone alone

the absent miracle

that happens anyhow.

*

The maddening sincerity of Schumann that is so beautiful.

*

Great Wagner comes from this

but something's lost along the way

could it be that words only dispel

the actual story only music can tell?

1 May 2010

Kingston

= = = = =

Christless cross
over the orchestra

how strange to proffer
the machinery of suffering

and not show the one
who offered himself

through such agony
for the sake of those

he thought were us?

1 May 2010

Kingston

= = = = =

Under the cross
the music walks
hand in hand
with my desires

I try to listen
with my hand
writing it down
what it happens

in me, May Day
grammar, a young
witch winds a strand
of her long hair

around my root.
Now I can say
everything wrong.
And someone is gone.

1 May 2010

Kingston

