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Ride the dragon cart
or at least the yellow lion
when you're on the merry-go-round

leave the little horses
to those who like go up and down
you want to go forward
roaring with fire
your word blurting over the forest
your word speaking the law.

22 March 2010

NEGLECT

is necessary
to let the seed grow
in the dark nutrient of time
till someone wake.

22.III.10

= = = = =

Where do you walk when you sleep
we are all sleepwalkers of course
only when we lie down do we wake up
dark inside down here and blessed quiet
no buzz in the ears no news of the day

I ready womb for winter—
some day this will be born again
with thousands of different questions
but all the answers will be the same.

22 March 2010

NIGHT HAWK

I used to think about that
all the small animals who go by night
for fear of bright sky marauders.
Efficient nature must have a bird for that.
Owl obvious, handsome, strange.
But isn't there something silenter
slenderer businesslike pounce?

22 March 2010

91.

Calling to call in you
no reason to reason

the naked stone is altar
unlifted from its memory a thing is holy

flow your wine across the skin of it
libation cold shallow but true

or does the thick interior of stone
have something to speak through the glazed surface

after a man's worth of polishing
she stands up to the air

I call this song I do not care
if you don't like it go listen to the rain.

23 March 2010

= = = = =

But because she's a girl and not a flower
it makes her look like a daffodil upside down,
the ample yellow skirt flared out above her knees

and because he's a man and not a bee
he's baffled — which way is down
into the chalice of the flower overhead

where religion itself suddenly seems smuttiness.
What shall he do? How shall his hands?
And it's getting to be time for daffodils

any week now, that flower whose name
is the way old Dutch said *the asphodel*
an animal who flourished in a far-off

underworld maybe not so different from ours.

22 March 2010

= = = = =

We live the ancient
side of something new
the opportunity

whenever I reach out
the tree moves away
but every morning find
its choicest fruit waiting
right by my hand.

23 March 2010

= = = = =

I can be little again
not as a child
but like an idea barely formed
you take with you to the mountains
to think about
while you breathe the pure air
in so deep you think you've thought.
But your just some footsteps on the rock.

23 March 2010

= = = = =

Some things are ready to wake
some to sleep.

It is like an opera
nothing really dies but the music.

23 March 2010

CHEMISTRY LESSON

I made a bitter cup and tried to sweeten it
in all this rain the trees seem closer

“you make a mark on the page
you do something to it and so on
till the work is done”

it only *happens* to be a word
it only happens to mean something

it's something that happens
in your head when you hear it

and what does the word tree feel like
in you just before you say it
so that at that moment
if you had a pencil you could write down *tree*

I am trying to explain
how capitalism works
the nothing that turns into something
by leaving me out

that leaving-out is the core of the work

this is Paracelsus speaking now:

Mercury = the feeling

Sulfur = the word written or spoken

Salt = the meaning left on the page or in the mind

and then the woman spoke

breathing on the blue mirror in the cocktail lounge

not a sound from the juke box *I'm in the mood.*

23 March 2010

= = = = =

What could I have been saying
that the rain hadn't said all night
and now the day gradually drying
into this violet twilight
where I discover myself owned
by the light, owned by what I see
because it is there, fleeting,
but more permanent than
the way I am looking at it,
all of it, a sound made visible
growing quieter and quieter
until there is nothing to see.

23 March 2010

= = = = =

The way the go
goes mind
until only wind
remembers

a deed a hand
laid on the skin
a mark in time
the ineradicable

nature of time
and what happens
to time stops time
right there forever

the irreversible
the excitement of the deed
no wonder it's a sin to be
just be, the apple of deciding

is the center of the earth
the paths are green down
there below a different sun
newfangled animals move

shaped like every gesture
you ever wanted to make
all the dance still in you
craving to do

you feel them in your body
even now, gorgeous
in their differences, all of them
busy turning into you

prancing from color to
color in a forest
made of something black
I'll look for it and tell you

the next time I go down.

23 March 2010

ARABELLA (1)

He has never touched her
the time is getting right to

She steps from the shower
into his bare arms

Now what. Squeezing
and speaking. Something wet.

23 March 2010

= = = = =

Each honeyed kiss untunes us
--Imre Madách

So a man in a desert he was
a somethingish boy from Brooklyn with a deep voice
who knew nothing of the law he should
but only glitter of the myriad sands
of what other people said, not God, not the Wise,
but the gorgeous palavering of everybody
he found in books. Around him
nobody said anything. Girls got on and off buses,
men went to work, old men with big hats
nodded in the autumn sun. My God my God
what is to be done with him,
how can he grow when every hour
was the kiss and every word the honey
and every bus brought his lovers home
the ones he knew who did not know him?

23 March 2010

THESE LAST

words a man could
sing, a broken reed
to whistle down it
like a little old man warming his hands

the loftiness
is all we have left
when the narcos have killed the last woman
blocked the last road
burnt the last city
and the fires of it dying stain the cloud

and the little old man who is anywhere
sitting even in the heart of the youngest lover
breathes on his hands
and hopes for a miracle
the only one when he closes his eyes.

23 March 2010

92.

Notice how I do not use specifics

I don't say Danube I say the river

this is the water I am always thinking

from meager pool down to guest-welcoming sea

that water belongs to another I do not name

the girl who pistol-whipped him with her hair

the town where my dead father walked right past me

sometimes all that's left of meaning is a face

some late emperor with a broken nose

a generic blue flower painted on an Egyptian tomb

or maybe it really is an orchid

Osiris's testicles reclaimed from this water too

as if we didn't know it all comes from there

like my mother's mother's mother's a seal from western isles

I can be specific when I'm forced to

when you roll your eyes and look away

when I have to be Byron again to hold your interest
when I have to prove that poetry pays

because nothing dies the gold is always there
just pick it up and queen it around

pull her hair and tell her mother if you're mad
we have no religion but we have a mighty god.

24 March 2010

93.

Slowly through the book of days the Emperor reads
the colors of the Tarot trumps she paints for him

panels taller than any man and full of light
pictures are the last things to keep their meanings

each day a panel eleven weeks and come again
this tower of hers reaches down from heaven

she illustrates herself in all of them
or all the women in whom she operates

everywhere in cloud he sees her face
in foliage he can spell out her name

if pictures speak for her they must be authentic
what he feels when he looks at them must be authentic too

now he can go back and rule the weather
warm the backyards of little houses on the edge of town

so the sun keeps coupling with the shadows
a door opens and a child hurries into light

but mostly her book is about the night time
when a different kind of child walks silently around.

24 March 2010