

1-2009

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## BOXCARS

a while since seen—  
what will it mean today  
a travel?

Scout  
scraping skin off on oaks  
sneaking glimpses  
of to go.

Simple train.  
A track is so go-ish  
and you're gone,  
servant of the moon.

And there you were  
on her bright landing strip  
when you woke out,  
a little stifling —no atmosphere—  
but lots of fun.

Because back in the days  
before oxygen  
—the built-in politics of living systems  
like ours, all parliament and fight—  
we could have handled mindfully  
all such wanton destinations.

But now you're on your own,  
bright girl in a no town.  
Sometimes I wonder what you see in me.

17 January 2009

= = = = =

What time is it another place  
give me matter—a rhomboid feeling  
then a cylinder hat for the man you think  
hasn't spoken for thirty years  
stands in the corner but soup vanishes  
nearby him so you suppose at last  
be must be alive. But who isn't?  
Then you remember the answer and weep.

17 January 2009

## THE WAY

Could I find my way home  
past St Mary's Seminary  
where the blue flagon of air  
pours out for the whole city.

Evident angels. I need  
to know where love is  
coming from and how it fell  
among us, in love

with itself in such a way  
that we can lift it gently  
from the fur of nursing  
mother cats and raise it

to the far-off moon.  
Or is it closer than we think,  
just at the end of the song,  
under the lip of a lily?

17 January 2009

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Looking through winter at the cemetery  
gives me an idea. A fence around the dead.  
We are different, somehow, people.  
But we don't understand how.  
Study the difference – the most obvious  
evidence is love. That one can say and  
mean it I love Mahler or I love Point Reyes  
when the fog comes in and the seals bark.

17 January 2009

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You left me by the side of the road—  
but it's my side

and my road  
and everyone who goes it has to deal with me

or be me, even, as I were content at last  
with being,

leaving to others all the  
fretting to become.

17 January 2009

[heard in/around sleep]

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Cast me — or glib  
to be another—  
wet around the neck and hard to hold

crimson clef upon your tender staff,  
milk me music, Magdalene,  
the white lines and black spaces  
are on the mirror's other flank

by which One stands who watches us  
in the terrible silence of pure witnessing.

17 January 2009



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Remembering things that are about to be  
snow limns every tree  
as if that's the answer to something.  
And it's up to me to make it be.

18 January 2009

Arabic, in your underwear  
learn to repeat. Speak  
loud as the honeybee  
talking to the flowers next summer—  
snow has such a quiet now voice  
trains you to listen,  
  
                        a god's undress  
*there is no sleep in heaven*  
that is for us the hell of it:  
non-intermittent consciousness.  
  
Bees again, ceaseless prattle of their wings  
we veer into music.  
  
Talk to me until your bones fall off  
and then we'll see what sky we're made of.

18 January 2009

= = = = =

I don't know – does someone fall off  
when the horse stops prancing, the steam  
calliope falls silent, the carousel stops?

We are whirled about  
to keep us from sleep—  
*change is the same as thinking*

mind wakes itself by moving  
stays away by sitting still.

Sweet wooden horse of poetry  
a painted ruby on your harness  
a painted gleam in your painted eye—

18 January 2009

## THEOLOGY

Leave the weave—  
two round men falling out of the air  
into where?

Where air's not, ink sinks  
deep in fiber – a word  
stifled into print –  
choking on color.

The horror of circles is  
circles always rhyme.  
The nose of the plane  
nuzzled under my arm,  
its fuselage your body was

and I kept you warm  
in the terrible cold sky –  
isn't that a little like  
responsibility, or Freud, or St Francis  
Hospital frowning at the river.

Who will catch the men who flee  
one is Isaac one is Ishmael  
far far the desert will trim them  
till only bone is speaking –

run away before they start to speak.

All I've been running from all my life  
is Abraham. I want an eye for no-eye  
a tower that gets there,  
a voice that knows how to disobey.

I want the unprompted heart,  
the blue sacrifice  
where every I gives himself to every you  
unasked for, barely welcomed  
but time itself is dance enough.

19 January 2009

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Leave the people out.

Think

the way a desert means.

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January dawn the loveliest  
shift of flesh light through bare trees

Everything coming towards you now  
the plowman from the stars  
wakes you with his coulter's scrape

We are blades to each other  
we cut the mistakes away.

\*

(Of course girls and cut and blood are obvious. Pathologies are obvious.  
Everything tells. But when the stars bleed, and the horizon itself becomes a  
knife, and when men do it too, the dreamer is clearly on the verge of  
waking.)

\*

He wears a phallus for a heart.  
He walks by dreaming.  
He says by leaving.

You knew him then, the same one  
again. Because there is only one.  
That is why she ran from Abraham.

Never far enough. Never desert enough.  
The spring that opened in the rock  
was remembering him,  
the water was his water—  
howling with anger she bent to drink.

Please, please, my soul my only harp  
keep exile Hagar from the hag of God.

19 January 2009



## **SANCTITY**

Men get older milder    then Mary  
Egypt as an option    a blur over the river  
frozen the day before yesterday now hard  
be a call from the dark    be a tree  
among deserts that is all I can ask

how lonely you are.

19 January 2009

## **THE INAUGURATION OF BARACK OBAMA**

The chain  
loosed a century ago  
finally falls  
  
its weight falls off us all.

20 January 2009

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I missed things and forgot things  
but things were still there.  
A property of them  
to be at hand.

But which hand? Where  
did I leave you last night,  
Musetta's little rabbit fur muff,  
the thorn from Christ's crown?

20 January 2009

## **TULIPS**

We did need those flowers  
to keep the winter safe,  
flowers on the table—  
enough said. Now see it.  
There. Them. Red.

20 January 2009