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I hold it
I fold it
over, a map
of the sky
I blow my noise in it
it is a hand
sized flag of a bad
country a piece
of paper.
A piece of paper.

2 March 2009

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Elegant? Don't you wish.
Cocktails—there's a funny name
and popular again, everything
is packaging, merchandising,
spin. I adore you
because you fall for every trick.
Rum. Go-go boots. Remember
kiwis? The clock (if any)
lives in your belly, like a bronze
Venus from an age before cocktails
even, when getting drunk required
a simpler dedication to reality.
Such as it was. Things are much
lighter now but still don't blow away.

2 March 2009

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The size of the thing oppresses
mostly, not the shape or delicate
finials, the sweet little faces of
nymphs and dryads round the shaft
anxious waitresses in the doomed café.

Art understood as a kind of money
bothers him, he wonders why he wrote
a diner menu in Gaelic in his dream
and his boss frowned at what he called
'presumption.'

But even the Irish
have a right to eat, and have a right
to know what they're eating. Let them
eat bread like the rest of us, monoglot
meat.

You must wake up now.
What did his disapproval signify?
In the jungle it is said that white men die
because they pay no attention to their dreams.

Who was the boss? I ate in a restaurant,
the Italian names of dishes seemed zany,
plucked from northern dialects, cutesy-poo.
The meat was good, no Irishmen in sight.

Was the superego telling me all this,
poetry just makes people frown, feel bad,
frown at me, try to get even? A sonnet
meaningless as a Gaelic wine list?
Tender lamb shank expressed in Attic Greek?

2 March 2009

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Brahms told me.
It was winter and.

Enfold me, arms.
I have waited
too long to
say everything now.

Now it must be.
All these sounds
to say one thing.

It is always winter
here, a mistake
has been made.

It is not too hard
to live. With it.
The snow also

a thing like drums
you hear them
where the light stops.

2 March 2009

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What was I thinking
when I was thinking

all I remember is
the careful focus
of the lens

not a thing
of what it saw

was I even there
with all the thinking

a mind in trouble
a man taking
a late afternoon nap

night when he wakes.

2 March 2009

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for Lisa Sanditz's *Sock City*

Not everybody can see these places

I see cities in the arid rock
but she sees comic book Apocalypse
in the colors of mere things—

buildings fit the world buildings are landscape
the land makes buildings what they are
everything dangerous and nothing ugly

all there is in the world is color

color is the bone on which the mind is strung
slung

beauty is dangerous on the other rock
the building wall a wall is as good as a window

she sees things as colors
and she can look right through the color of money
and see the colors of vision that drives us all

every commerce means a kiss

factory means to build a mind

a million men can live in a million women

these stupid socks in my hands ready to put on

she proves have walked beyond the galaxy

into the actual world

gathering the dust of all remoteness here.

2 March 2009

TIPHARETH

So what is missing
is quiet splendor

the sun in the center
of the body
middle of an eye

No matter how clothed
the body's middle
shines. It is geometry
not apparency
makes this happen.

By the light given off
by the Other's body
we know to move

this isn't a love story
this is love.

3 March 2009

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(among all the asperities of Paul Celan
his easy pronouns)
(always shock me)

3 March 2009

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Crouching by desire
a thing about waiting
shadows in the rafters
of a house you never owned
haunt me

certain books on the shelf
collect my seeing
and hold me—
they too are unread

as we are to each other at last
books we'll never open
lodged in the mind
inconceivable identity.

3 March 2009

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Something is always
a word
broken from its tree.

3 March 2009

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Peterson's Illustrated

FIELD GUIDE TO EASTERN WORDS.

includes CD with all of their
calls, distress signals, songs.

3 March 2009

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Near now? Mozart's
famous smile.

If we can't give our bodies
what can we give?

3 March 2009

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Close to a face
its features blur—

identities exist
only at a certain distance—

we depend on it to be
who it is we think we are.

3 March 2009

HEAT

When a house burns down in winter
the flies asleep in the woodwork
wake up just before they die.

(I hate the grimness of that,
the truth of that,
the fierce red cock screaming on the roof)

3 March 2009

OPUS 61

is the famous violin concerto
recast for the piano. It is wind
replaced by water. Sunlight
replaced by desert rock—
heat carried into the night.

It is none of these. Things that music
makes us think about are our things
only, not its. Nothing belongs to music.

The weird soft geometry of women and men
lets them turn out the sounds of music

but what lets music itself happen?
And why does it depend on nothing?
Or on everything? Piano trill.
Suddenly so quiet in here.
I wonder if the morning birds outside
are listening. And what they hear.

3 March 2009

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Just ask the question.

Then hurry out of the room.

Do it. Just for a change

you be the answer.

3 March 2009

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Shrill the ears at morning why.
The non-stop music of the mind
sometimes lets me hear it
like a mosquito going by
or staying. A jungle quick
growing up around my ears.
For a long time I thought it was the world.

2.

I thought it was summer
or you in the other room
humming. But it is just me
hearing in my unrelenting sleep.

3 March 2009

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Exorbitant celebration
of mediaeval masses—

flowers were not invented yet
they had to make do with music

luscious young voices but
imagine a world before roses!

Had to make do with birds
outside the window pigeons in the rafters

and people people on their knees
saying old old words with all their might

a single moment halfway to heaven
flies buzzed. There was a piece of bread.

3 March 2009

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Room for me left in the clutter of whose heart
stumbling from Jericho, sees big light,
sees me like a stain on her handkerchief
stain on her apron, star in the sky.

Where else would it be? Brown dust
in old books, the gutter between pages
adrift with it, to read is to breathe—
a poisoned book sent to his wife's friend,

Cicero's *De Amicitia*, it was, treatise
on friendship. Now do you remember me?
I was the one who tried to write it right,
to heal by word what sickness came from feeling.

3 March 2009