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We need ascension
the iron rule of gravitas
hold no longer

be a heretic of that religion, rise
unimpeded, hot-air balloon

hot air means talking talking
and by talk and talk alone
the truth is known

a little girl lost in the sky.

22 March 2009

= = = = =

The ink writes us I think
its fluency our lexicon and Orinoco

Everything I have ever said
I have been made to say

by something or by something else—
sometimes even that thing was me

but that's the worst of them
to write when the ego is a gun pointed at my head.

22 March 2009

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Care full aftermath – I read your book
and felt like a shadow on your lap—
a few more pages and you would know me
better than I would be known,
this wise text. It's hard to see
in all this light, I smell new-cut wood,
between two logs I see a spider.

22 March 2009

(for Lori Moseman)

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Raptors vexed by crows relent
and that's what we are, the latter I mean,
black and noisy and busy, clearing
the local sky of savage politicians
prowling always overhead – the point
of hawks and such is not their greed
or hunger or cruelty even, but that
they prey only on tiny things, defenseless
things – no wonder kings and armies choose
eagles for emblems. My country is a crow.

22 March 2009

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Careful but blue. A door
with a person's silhouette inside
coming in or going out.

The decency of night to be dark
all round, where light
is a distraction, a distortion—

who is that person in the doorway.
And why. Neither in nor out,
signless sign. Imagine a blind person
and you touch the person's bare neck
with a flower – daffodil or iris petal—
what could the person tell you of the spring?
Is anything out there, beyond sensation,
past what the skin knows? I struggle
with my blanket but I can't wake up.

22 March 2009

THE CLOSET

Language makes queers of us all

language is the closet
from which we will never really get out

out yourself
out of words

LORE

EGO

WORLD

and there we are, trapped,
somewhere in there
muffled in the gorgeous sweat of fur and silk
language is the beautiful old clothes of other people
we live in their smell.

22 March 2009

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Eventually the slate falls off the roof
the roof falls off the house
the house falls off the earth
the earth falls out of the sky.
Here are the first crocuses of this spring.

23 March 2009

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I want to find someone's face
to look at me
from inside myself

and no one see it, not even me,
but it would see.

23 March 2009

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I have been young too long—
I still believe in someone.

23.III.09

= = = = =

A kinder measurement
by moonset reckon
so no two nights the same
and none too long

there is a calendar
made of coral
I have a friend
with a little yellow car

it is long ago
we're not in school anymore
but we aren't anywhere else
we live by color alone.

23 March 2009

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Once this would have been a cathedral
but now it's a snapshot of a woman's face.

23.III.09

= = = = =

“We suspect more than we can prove.
This does awful things to our private lives
but keeps us on our toes.” Then
the train lurched forward
and I heard no more. And wanted less.

23.III.09

STARS

Das Ganze ist das Unwahre

I used to use stars a lot
to mark the end of one poem
or the start of another
in my notebooks. Or were they
like the actual stars
parts of the sequence of unending text
and my puny divisions were my infant grasp,
Aristotle's wholeness is a torn-off fragment
of an immaculate ongoingness
stuffed in a toothless mouth.
After I wrote this I checked my mail
and found a friend sent me Adorno:
The whole is the untrue.

23 March 2009

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Does a word defile an image?

If I write your name on a picture of you
which comes first?

Could a word belong to a name?

Can things ever really be together?

Theory of Marriage.

A person to begin with
is a Cornell box – put
two of them together face to face
and the world's left out. Inside,
a congeries of lunacy. A self. A love.

23 March 2009

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Soften the hard biscuit

in coffee, break it

in hard teeth.

This is food.

This is how you distinguish yourself

from the world

by taking it in.

This mastery, this gulp of fitness

in a mouth of you.

We are sad people,

little acts of incorporation

our consolation.

23 March 2009

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The origin is never the beginning.
Bright sun. Very cold.
Look for the origin in your breast pocket
or your trouser pocket, or, naked,
late at night, standing at the top of the stairs.
The origin looks at you, or touches.
Or you touch it.

Only then can you begin.

The world is the answer that comes before the question.

23 March 2009

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A kind aversion
from unsightly sir
allows madame
a breath of eye

in which a first
lieutenant springs
white wefted in
tunic like a turnip

o if a flute could
sing human words
hazard for our ears
this *chanson de navets*.

23 March 2009

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Because the other
is a wall.

A yellow tall
brick wall and a blue winter sky.

This much is true.
There is no end
to remember,
many meanings
none of them exact.

The wall
is waiting Mercy.
Forgiveness itself
is a god.

I translated this without knowing the lingo
from the snaky writing on the wall,
Persian maybe, blue letters, gold
letters, a commentary maybe on the Koran?
A guide to growing roses?

(16 February 2009)
23 March 2009

AMANUENSIS

for Nathan

Blue certainties
turn Nestorian black.
I flew a bomber
for the RAF. I dove
beneath a bed in hope
of hiding from husbands.
Every man is born
with a blue knife
not all of us cut.
The library is closed
but the stairs still work.

23 March 2009

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in memory of Nicholas Hughes

Or don't know how to do it right—
maybe it's as simple as that,
a failure of lethal technology
and the pain goes on.

Even when it works
it doesn't work.

Sutra, guide me.
Climb the stairs inside every thing you see
and you will get there.

Any door
leads everywhere.

Exhaust yourself
in wanting, become whatever is left.

All your scruples
are birds' wings
but where is the sky?
They fly by refusing
until the air says yes
and sustains.

Swallows over the Luberon
sleep in mid-air,
but when you wake in darkness where is the sky?

24 March 2009