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“in America there’s always a moon”

—Randolph, in *Daisy Miller*

But we have to share it sometimes

with the other side, the Pope and the King of Sweden

for W.S., on his birthday

That one spins logic. This one is weaving
goat hairs into sunlight. Look:
her maiden fingers link codes of silver.

And over there the molecules of human speech
reveal a hidden drift of argument
—we are not alone—from some intelligence

that asks a lot of ours—a jest, figure me out.
We have made progress—sonnets subpoenaed,
holograms on crucifixes, cochlear implants

tuned to the everlasting internet—choice never,
right now any sound is as good as any other
as long as you hear it, as long as it teases out

the endless murmuring of your soul, that
pointless tinnitus of reverence and praise.

23 April 2009

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The mirror said so
and the mirror doesn't lie.
Doesn't tell the truth either—
how have I hidden from you,
world. the face I know so well?
A grim voluptuary with pale fear.
It could rain but probably won't—
ironcast alibi—Coleridge
said it first, amphimacers
I just repeated, the chasm, the midnight,
the terror and made it mine.
Fear is common, no man owns it,
look at this dark sky
dark as Good Friday and be afraid.
The doctor will hurt you now.
Then the sky breaks.

23 April 2009

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Sweet sarcasm of birdsong—
robins mostly—claiming a place in the world
for their ruddy appetites—
bad as we are. eat eat eat.

So that's the problem. Eating is. No
vegan or fruitarian or grass alone
is the answer. Not eating is the answer.
How can we learn not to eat at all?

Because all eating is killing something—
the gentle germ of wheat no less than the woolly lamb
dies in our teeth.

23 April 2009

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The color of the color is what is strange

take away the color
and the color tells the truth

It has to be all around you
till there's nowhere else.

24 April 2009

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Ashamed to write love
poems these days we still
think them sideways

buildings, pocketable objects
we sign our presence with
word by word into your we hope hands.

24 April 2009

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If a circle has no close
it wears the outside in.

24.IV.09

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Would it have been enough to be near the beginning of anything?

What if the word answered back
one night when you were walking as so often
not alone on a dark road

and the word said to you
out of the trees?
Just said. And you so startled
at the voice—but it wasn't
a voice, just a word—
that you could ever after
remember what the word said,
ay midnight, you and wife
alone, and a blank word?

24 April 2009

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Would it be here in the sense of hear?
Is presence enough? Can a squirrel in
the backyard be a *visitor*? One waits,
one waits. One resorts to impersonal
optatives and non-finite verbs, letting
grammar do one's hoping for one, hoping,
always hoping. Rilke in Paris. What
do we ever do but proffer our pain?
Try to sell you my pain so you can use
mine to refresh your own? One Sunday I
walked through the empty streets and heard
far off a man's deep voice singing.
No one in the streets, no cars, only
a man's voice singing. A voice out walking.
finally it found me or I found it, it sang
closer to me, a blind man on the far side
of the street, a little square, coming
towards me, to the left of where I was,
he kept walking and his song kept saying.
Whatever else I learned in Paris that
summer, I learned that emptiness never
can be sure of being without a voice.

24 April 2009

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What say, magnolia,
nice to live
by a neighbor's house
where the girls go in and out?

Isn't it the same woods
music always knew
a voice alone
all full of hope

hope that someone hears
and it's the right one.
And from that hope
the breath comes

that stirs around you
your few ripe weeks
of purple listening,
what say, magnolia?

24 April 2009

NUMEROLOGY (1)

So 1 divided by 14 is

0.071428 then a lot more digits

(how many more?)

but I note that in these a doubling

happens: seven, fourteen, twenty-eight.

Something must be going on.

So I asked a number:

Will you go all the way?

With me? Will you give up cow's milk

and wearing turquoise, and come with me

wide grassland with hawk hover over it?

And just for me? I want a number

to call my own, from my finca

outside Cumanà I rule the world—

only the leaves of things disobey me—

trees are gods, but leaves have no religion,

let us count them till they fall down and worship me.

24 April 2009

NUMEROLOGY (2)

Some live by counting
some by ignoring.

A rowboat
carries the old woman
to the other side.

I wave and she waves back,
her small lace
handkerchief fluttered from her hand
waving. And she too
is a number, or the mother
of all numbers, a smile,
a boat, the distances untamed.

24 April 2009

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Woke at dawn burdened with an afternoon.

That is how it is with politics,

that is, all of us. Public people

locked in tiny beds. Is her majesty

awake yet? Is the commissar for arts

ready for his soft-boiled egg?

Religion

makes sinners of us all, politics killers,

logic fumlbers, music deaf mean at the shore

watching the multitudinous roar.

25 April 2009

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No way away and no way in.
To be young and sensitive is in the trap.
Age only makes the trap get bigger.

Finally the sky sneers at you
huddled down in your life,
tosses you some April rain.

No way out and no way in.
Until the in turns inside out.

25 April 2009

THIS GAME POURS INTO THE SEA

Always something at his elbow drinks.

Parlor trick: turn your pretty aunt
into a lampshade, light up the room
with what's under her skirt. Boys
have to begin somewhere – let gender
sort out the incoming mail. Here's
a funny purple stamp, from Ecuador
where they eat clouds – unless my Spanish
is not what it was back then. When?

[sings:]

When I was fat and in my teens
And called it love in New Orleans

or any other song. A rage to get it right
makes kids go wrong. I know,
I stood by the boiled peanut basin watching,
counting change in my pocket with practiced thumb,
fill a Dixie cup with the gas they leave
in the hoses, write my name in fire,
chew aspirin for my aching teeth—
what do you mean I should read Plato?
Before Aristotle was, I am.

25 April 2009

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Which doesn't get to be a love poem, does it?
I'd rather write about ducks on the river
or Ibn Arabi at midnight in the Sharif's garden

and spend all my actual durative time with you,
just you—call it love-prose and all day long,

and save the poetry for God and Achilles,
Gloucester harbor and the rights of man,
saving Shasta from white government,

whispering all the time those secret spells
that brought you once upon a time to me.

25 April 2009

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Images wash out of you let them go
or take a color from the dark in your pocket—
we learn to saturate colors by living
and make 3D images of passing thoughts.
Whence the world. Imagine otherwise:
that we love each other might be an engine
to make all things everywhere run safe.
So that two people really loving would be
the same as everyone. Suddenly then
we would be squatters in Paradise
with no bright bailiff to drive us out.

25 April 2009

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In fact inside the mind is fact
and when you're there you're everywhere.

Hence the dependable popularity of
love, opium, religion
and other warp-agents of the seeming Obvious—

o Otherness vector me home!

25 April 2009

= = = = =

Cassandra walk me everywhere I go
her beautiful useless truth is all I need.

25 April 2009