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Those things are bearing newly
down and in – childbirth in a rose –
the particulars so often grisly
but the sun is bright as a thorn

Let thought be nearby and
nearly, not a stake in the heart
of thinking, let it be next
and let the moment thoughtless lie

seeing this enoughs me well.

16 November 2009

= = = = =

So many close or would I rave?
A curriculum of rapture—
Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan,
Hopkins, Thompson, Yeats,
Williams, Thomas, Duncan—
each of these a skeptic is
or Christian cynic or some such
rationable margin to the mind
possessed in all the lust-rich singsong
of their wise (yes!) inscriptions
by hearing we answer.

16 November 2009

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Call me from the stage
when I am Lear again
and make me Prospero.

16.XI.09

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Halfway between the lute and the lady
the song broke. Bits of it
cracked on the pavement, still there,
you can pick up chunks of it

any time you pass that way.

Orpheus. If you dare.

There are stranger things than stone
a song leaves behind,

arrows stuck in trees, vines
mysteriously cursive on the grass
the fake calligraphy of natural things
we read to make them genuine.

If we dare. To take what happens
and understand it has to
and what the whole mosaic is
from which these scraps toppled.

We scrabble among fallen things
to make what sense we're able.

17 November 2009

IMPERMANENCES

1.

Bricks are still firm
and nails in wood
and tar on rooftops
but how long?
How long will crucifixes
hang on old ladies' walls?
Smooth dome of the sky
the seal-fur coat of night,
how long will they wear us,
how long this leaf?

2.

Image angst in teenage universes
we live on the side of a hill
language skateboards a dead ocean
surfs all round us miracles of flatness

then they fall. Uphill music,
blue-eyed religion, I will leap up
from the book I was reading
to the highest heaven you

will be there only if you are here
where the millwheel turns
pleasantly in the autumn stream
stoneless grinds the memory of wheat.

17 November 2009

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Ashley:

I have nothing in my heart.

The words of the moon sing in his mouth,

I have nothing, I have no heart.

Robert, answering a few days later:

He had a mouth though

for the moon to sing through

quietly like sheep in the prairie

midnight and maybe

a mouth is the same as a heart.

17 November 2009

IN NATURE'S SWAY

che ga na shi

her swift red hair
the wind compels her in us

no boat no romance
we are the whole sea

the cast of mind
we are what comes

I say it in clearest Greek
we are what comes to mind

on the slopes of Ararat say it
we come to what we are

plain as water wide as water

a man amounts to
whatever his mind casts up
to be spoken in the moment of need

as to say the poem has
no other hero but the saying,

the whole Iliad a dream Achilles had
sick with poison-arrow sickness
and dying at her feet.

2.

What could you have meant
by a new word
but the next word in your strange market of a mind
cabinet of unlikenesses
a scrap of Heraclitus
some shells from Borneo.

che be born

ga get old

na get sick

shi be dead

what else is new
is up to you.

The else is you.

3.

This one thing explains it all.
The scruple of difference
whereby some stuff you know

or half-know or heard or overheard
now “comes to Psyche’s aid” and speaks

ex ore infantum, that is, out of your mouth, baby,
every page a day of learn to speak.

By the time we’ve heard all the stories,
every one,

we’re ready to begin.

The poem begins
where the story ends
and happens in
your lonely now.

18 November 2009

PHONATION

for Michael

Whispering is listening
getting in the way of
what you're trying to say
no wonder it's hard.
Phonate, he said. Be loud
let the animal below
bellow small words out
one mouth at a time
to celebrate a departure
from the habit of silence
where in images it's thought.

18 November 2009

THE BONE THAT'S LEFT

Child is it or chance
geology of islands
Antarctic is it?

Every harbor in the world
loves the same, holds
the same arms open.

The stand on shore.
The cliffs of Moher.
Jersey cross the water—

willing victims of the flood—
girls fantasize rape cities
fantasize catastrophe

doesn't mean it doesn't
happen but it never
happens as you think it

a picture happens only
once. The rats come out
before the moon goes down.

Iron tries to forgive
the tears that make it rust.
Stuff like that,

too soft for tragedy
She used to live in a house right by the el
the pain is forever but intermittent

the pain is dependable, is noise.
Not like the noise that rises
in your head, the chatter of images

you try to spit out as words.

19 November 2009

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Rarely closer this morning of the goat
the goat is Jupiter belongs
among eagles and the great coiled Meilichios serpent

for Zeus comes to rule all the world
and the unseen Gods are unseen indeed
Hades with Queen Persephone
and Poseidon shaker of our certainties

I went to the sea once
to find him
and he has never left me since

his easy net
soft round my shoulders as I speak.

I worry all the other Gods
their whereabouts among us—
a god (“the one who is called”)
once summoned never leaves—
there is enough of her or him
for everyone, energy
without attitude, unnegotiated light.

19 November 2009

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Nothing yet a trumpet
in small hands
a blonde sound nimbly
birds fall from the sky.

19.XI.09

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Religiously like a tunafish
preying widely incorporating
in himself the unwise mercury
of all the seas we eat.

19.XI.09

= = = = =

The word forgot its overcoat.

The world is cold.

The world lost its glove, the right one.

The word has a sore throat.

All the prizes have been given.

Baudelaire stares at a smallish flower
someone dropped on General Aupick's tomb
and thinks: I too am buried there.

The word cries for its translator,
the word refuses to drink its milk
the word flings newspapers on the floor
but no one will bring the word wine.

They call them waiters cause they make you wait
they call it orange because their mouth is full
they call it poetry but it has no tree
they call them people but they can't see.

Finally the word is alone at every table there is.
No one dares to sit down beside the word.
Or face it opposite endure those never-closing eyes.

19 November 2009

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I'm not sure I could ever hear it
from where I sit, an amaze
of solid in some trees
where, or which, the sun has melted.

Names of old-time religion still insist.
Poseidon, brother of the sky. Sant Iago
Christ of the West, who led the Grail
into invisibility. Where we can find it.

Mary Magdalen, Mary Baker, use
the name you choose, your own name
is too secret, too sacred to say.

20 November 2009

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Don't you know who I am
even now? I'll never tell
you have to know
who I am all by yourself
just as you know any
real thing you know.

I am the one who says Listen
I am the one who says Speak
who am I? I am the one
who says Touch, who says Let go.
Who am I, do you know yet?
Write down a bunch of spells
and do what they tell.
Then you will know. Ride
your own ass into Jerusalem
but do it by night, no one watching.
Open the gate. Know who I am.

20 November 2009

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As once God said
nobody seems to be able
to look at me and live

so nothing will come right
until your body matches your face.

20 November 2009