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Because they lay across the middle of the street and would not answer
but because began with an A
and the letter from the British university spelled along side as 2 words
and I wondered in my sleep if this was the sea

so black and friendly to strangers
that poetry leads to, with feathers
on its pretty ass and a little candle
stolen from a church in my childhood
held up before it, crimson votive light
color of flashlight through the skin of your fingers
leading us eager ones into the dark
until the water creeps above our knees and we beget.

Or is it just one more dawn on earth
a car on its way through the rain?

1 February 2008

= = = = =

A certain bafflement
or it could be a tree
not in the wilderness
and not too far
even by suburban measure

but this tree bears eggs.
Leaves that are our thoughts
tremble. Hands of the ancient
surgeon to whom we entrust
meekly the mind we wear.

Tremble. Snip. The irreversible.
Decision. How should we call it virtue
Proust has a prig enquire
if it's only the inevitable consequence
of an infracranial operation?

No more marvelous than ice in winter.
Yet how the tin roof gleams like a miracle
and a hawk is amber on the throat of the sky!

1 February 2008

MAN & COAT

Don't go too much longer than now—
have you been waiting for me?

Of course, I am your coat.

I will fill you with myself.

Do as you please, pliable
is my nature, capacity is my grace.

Enclose me!

 It is done,
one hand after the other
enter the sleeves of our relationship,
button me up to your chin if you dare
and down to your imperfect parts...

What's imperfect about them, cloth?

They must be lacking, since they call out
to and for some other to come complete them.

O coat, that sounds like mere base logic,
what else could I expect
from a person woven cunningly on a loom
obedient to Jacquard's dismal mathematics
then sewn up in sweatshops by women
straining ever to emigrate elsewhere
just as logic is never satisfied with what just seems—
and you should know that the parts of desire
are perfect in their very incompleteness!
Their outcry is perfection! Their plaint is paradise!

You delude yourself, dear body, but I will keep you warm.
You mock the very logic that keeps you snug in my entelechy.

1 February 2008

= = = = =

Close to Neverday
a bill comes due

a man comes to
from deepsea drowse

and here are marbles
scattered at his feet

dangerous leftovers
from a child's despondent

geometry, physics already
inhibit-habiting the mind.

1 February 2008

= = = = =

The travel agent's holiday
spends her in a snuff closet

among her winter clothes
warm and soft assuring.

Her eyes are closed to get
even with the sunlight

and let her personal
midnight in. Wall

behind her back firm
she sits at peace

grasps her drawn up knees
and won't let go.

This is where I am,
she thinks, all me,

finally already there.

(a week ago or so)
1 February 2008

ASTYwANAX

But there was a child.
The gates were high
they threw him down
women's voices cried

and nothing to be done.
A child is everyone.
Darling, darling, I dream
for you, my eyes are closed

except the one inside
remembers you, the muscles
of your color, the bones,
fine bones, of your light.

You are all I have left to do.

1 February 2008, Olin

CONCERT HALL

Faces in the far parterre,
faces in the balcony.
I know some of these
people I don't know,

the darkness of music
hides their identity
and swallows mine
till I'm just a sound I hear.

Sooner or later we all
become alone whatever
happens to us. Far
away. Listening. Unclear.

1 February 2008, Olin

RAJ

So should we be listening to what is not spoken?
Of course. That is the Kipling in us.
colonizing the dark. Colonizing the dream.

Northwest Frontier. Waiting for the invasion,
sense pouring into nonsense, and suddenly
all our fantasies become the thing itself.

This place. No theory needed to explain.

(several years ago, found)
2 February 2008

SPECIAL WAITING

An hour on the cross and still
we weren't listening.
Another hour and he found
some ordinary words
to frighten and confuse us.
How could he of all people
be suffering so?
After three hours
he gave up the struggle
to get through to us.
We would not understand.
It's our business not to,
we are programmed
for enraptured ignorance.
Then it is said in a book
he gave up the ghost.
The ghost was us, or in us,
but he smiled, I think,
knowing how much longer
it would take before we knew.
So much longer but we
would get there, if he could.
And then he was there
and we went our way
only it wasn't ours anymore,
unknown personages
walk inside us, knowing
something of the road.

2 February 2008

= = = = =

But there are places under the sea
where dawn looks just like this

and rings on her fingers too, aquamarine,
chrysoprase, an opal and light tinkering with it,

and then the trees, those living speculations,
begin to sift the light through considering fingers,

midwinter bare is pure philosophy
beautiful and hard to bear, Imbolc-tide,

the Irish light turns her other cheek to us,
winter's weary, Brid the Mindful rules

and Saint Joyce gets born around now.
History is just all that colored stuff

to keep me going till it's dawn again.

3 February 2008

= = = = =

I speak some English but I speak Selfish best,
it's the floorboard of my mind
and what lives underneath it,

I could rid myself of rats maybe,
those lean grammarians down below
analyzing everything to one more dialect of me.

But their little teeth are cunning so I let them live.

3 February 2008

STOP AND START AGAIN

1.

An unusual humility
overtakes me,

like the Queen of Hearts
slipping from my sleeve.

Why that? Why like?
Nothing is like anything, it's all just Mahler again
and you're crying,

you're playing with yourself and lose.

2.

What we like is seldom good for us
but nothing's better. Cowboys
I have been, deserts I also have been
bamboozled by the distances. Heatshimmer
of pointless roads. How could I even think
of being anywhere else, I'm barely here.

3.

Dr. Miracle called again
to talk about my pancreas.
I put him on hold
where I keep Organs, Inner,
Awareness of.

Both of them may still be there.

3 February 2008

IMAGINE THE INTERIOR

until this empty place
becomes your only you

remove the organs one by one
thinking of something else—
a bird with some yellow in it
perched on a snowy branch, say—

unloop the intestines, set them free
and all those sacks and pouches
empty out into the sea—
but never think about it

just this about the endless hall
you'll be left with
in you, a gothic space
lit in every color through

your universal skin.
Then walk there
alone or with dear friends
in the quiet dimness of that place

daring to understand so little.

4 February 2008

= = = = =

Snow sifting down
everything a miracle again.

4.11.08

= = = = =

Winterthunder winterlighting
rainday in Israel indeed the weird
of snow this valley is Judaea
no this valley is Gehenna a lotus
floating on a scum of oil
what comes down lightning
in our midst. Into this dissolving.
All earth takes is rain.
Pelting roofcoats, alignment
of ancient cars the slow Carnac
slow Stonehenge of commuters
stationary up and down the road
late for their tryst with time
o Christ the patience of human people
who alone are stabbed or guided
by the clock hands o Christ the serene
anxiety of every other living thing
 whose clock is in its belly
 nothing to forget.
Now break
the week in pieces,
set your autos free.

5 February 2008

RK, HIS BESTIARY

I wanted to be part of your pleasure
but have become just a mangy black panther
pacing the narrow cage of your anxiety.

*

What I wanted to be was a different kind of animal.
Something clever as a kangaroo but rare as an owl
the whole night in my wings! And who were you?

*

Bluejays bother little birds.
I take both sides of the argument—
size matters. Manyness counts.
Seeds for all there might well be
but no one has ever come
to the end of all the seeds to want.
So big blue bops little brown
and little dusky fellers scatter
and somehow it all feels like home,
your old mother crying in the night.

5 February 2008

= = = = =

Other irises wait for spring
but this comes down,

a cloud shimmer, spun
spectrum on the CD
whirling now, the music
catching, analyzing light.

Everything looks like oil.
Spinal marrow. Mother of God.

5 February 2008

MP ΘY

The icon you sent,
the whole of her
and then her face—
will I ever be ready to look in her eyes?

Her eyes condemn me for sins against women
whoever I am,
leaving them or coming back too soon or never,
touching them or never reaching out,

wanting them or wanting them not.
I am a sinner in her eyes, she's angry,
not like your average Madonna
all moony sweet and still bewildered,

all swoony with tenderness for
what she holds in her arms
that could be you or me someday.
No this one knows the score, is fierce,

she sees what I will do to you, and thus to her,
to all who are hers, and to this person she sustains
awkward on her lap as if He too
should watch His step, even a God

is temporary, a little springtime, but she is always.

5 February 2008

WHY IS A DOG?

I don't understand dogs
why they are and how
they so became us, how
each one looks at me
the way its owner thinks
of or at me, how each one
belongs to some curious
and scary condition
halfway between a muscle
and a mind, a mind with
teeth, a muscle with a slim
margin of sympathy, a dog
would stroke me too
if it could and that also
I fail to understand.

6 February 2008

= = = = =

Not the language to too many learn
upon the part of is it is

are you? After and all the dancers
were, the simple one sat

how could else have been to a one
or some other, a drink, a dark, a do?

We are nearly near. We are nearby.
But by is a we-less place, an enterer

is a solo act, a solipsist scripture, a Venn
diagram with nobody home

you know? What is it to answer?
In one language the sound means ask

in the other language answer. Almost
as if it knew. I think it knows. It knows.

6 February 2008

= = = = =

My knees in the thirl of the desk
keep calm beneath
the scribble frenzy going on
a foot above them

—thus the opposite of a duck
who is all serene on the surface
secretly paddling furious below.

6 February 2008