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As if it were after all a hole
and something digging. Simple as that
ornate as angels are represented,
they are not. It is one thing:

a pebble, a cathedral, a cat.
You understand. It is about paying
attention, everything, everything
is a transaction, the particular

is all we need. Antifreeze. Not war,
not that terrible generalization
ending earth. Not yet
let that blue eye close.

10 May 2008

= = = = =

I will never explain our relationship.
Or any. The webs that link us
are invisible, unbreakable, true.
Who *are* you? we keep whispering
to the dark. And it keeps not answering.
It doesn't even say I am the dark.
Forget the mesh, the web, the net
all the synonyms that trap us too
in a purgatory of mere resemblances.
Forget. Forgetting is almost as good
as getting out. But if you forget
you'll never get out. Too many
blue flowers, in every mountain cleft
glistening at you wet with dew.
Too many and too few. Who *are* you?

10 May 2008

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There's a long Sanskrit word for that
when we're in town I'll look it up

right now the lime tree knows it better
since trees don't know how to forget

I know you're a Martian but don't
you people have fire engines too?

Are conflagrations a thing of your past
like babbling brooks and the zoa bird?

I take your silence as a sulky Yes.
But then I always do.

That's what the siren means.

11 May 2008

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Answer the other question otherwise—
who are you talking to, battleship?

You didn't grow up with orange shoes,
with brown pants ripped in the crotch

and all the wounds of class, race,
gender, the sickness of religion,

the skeleton face of no more money.
No, you had a private tree,

you knew your grandmother's maiden name,
the sky above your scalp was full of birds—

you have no right to look at me like that
even if you're not even listening. But who is?

11 May 2008

TEMPORAL INSTABILITY

The bassoonist steps
quickly on stage.
She has bare shoulders.
No more fog in London.
No more calling cards.
She shapes her lips
around a slender tube.
The sound is something
rising and falling
in the human spine.
Mine. No weather
any more. Just a sound
slowly taking my place.

11 May 2008, Olin

SPECTACLES

For sixty years
I have seen the world
through glass.

This is better at least
than so many of my friends
looking up at everything through the grass.

11 May 2008, Olin

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In the opening of Shostakovich's
Opus 67 trio the instruments
violin, cello, exchange essences,
each plays the other's notes,
each lives the life of the other.
Heraclitus. Swift dark cello fire
Saturn piano keeps ordinary time.
We walk in our graves, Troy
to Baghdad one tortured stroll.
Why do artists glorify
what is so terrible? War. Love.
My hand. Your hand.

11 May 2008, Olin

ALLEGRETTO

There's always a fox
waiting to trot. Russian,
black fur. Beat time
at its own game.
Decode the weather.

11 May 2008

MUSIC IN PUBLIC

The overthereness of other
bodies on the stage of the street,

otherness of the other
body prism'd in the field of own space

that we are held, held,
in and to the actual

design, the web of where,
the nowhere else but here.

2.

I look at the bodies
of the musicians from their
effort music flows.

No sound without an arm
throat shoulders.

No music without a body
of the other the over there.

And even when there
becomes here and my own
fingers touch some keyboard
the body I am playing with
is the body of another,
sometimes even the body of the other.

11 May 2008, Olin

Listening to Beethoven's Ninth Quartet

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You're asking a lot of me to expect
this glass to get up from the table and refill itself
like one of those family roadhouses
where the tea-weak coffee in the cup magically
gets topped up all through the meal by an anonymat
wearing a badge you can't decipher. Lisl?
Tiff? Glor? What are they, then you forget.
No, I'm not being disagreeable, this is flarf,
sweetie, the worst kind, the kind you make up
from the other side of your head, the weird
Outernet we live in, the sizzling intertext,
this fatal accident, the world. Yes, I am
grumpy, doesn't it make me a little lovable?

12 May 2008

THE GAME

Cowbirds on the pitch
cowbirds eating seed
then the blackbird comes.
We think they're eating
but they're playing a game
called Living On and Off
the Earth. It goes on
above us all day long.
And think of the swallows
who hardly ever comes down,
sleep on the wind, and think
of penguins who only in their
dreams ascend to the emptiness
where they used to live.
Birds, birds. So many rules.

12 May 2008

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Wait by the watchers.
They have been there,
here, almost from the start.
They are stone.
They witness how a one
loves another with a voice
with a skin.

They understand
nothing of what they see.
They are like us and the stars,
the nearby weather.

But they witness. We do
also. It is the one thing we share.

12 May 2008

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When we give up
we go down.
Give down instead
and where would be

and who know how
far anything goes
and does with us
and which way is up?

We live in a bewilderment our language accurately (and playfully, to help us) enacts. All the while it contains the tools to clear things up. As every child knows, every figure of speech, every commonplace, is mysterious. Every child is still foreseeing the bolt (or is it boat?) from the blue. Every child what up is that a beaten boxer gives. And where it lives.

13 May 2008

APEIRON

The north is different from the other night.
A ball torn by a dog's
teeth still rolls, won't bounce
to speak of. A star over it different

from any other light. I keep
on wondering up your road,
the glimmer of a lover and a lover
toppling in the narrow bed

endless. Unboundedness.
The condition grammar calls 'you.'
The *mysterium tremendum*.
Deep warm pockets. Hands.

13 May 2008

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I understand. It is the time
of turning away or the time
to tell the quiet fractures in
the wall you never looked at
even once. A face. But saw.

The book was wrong on the floor.
Had fallen there the way they do
when the hands get tired of hearing
or the heart does and the hands know
and there it goes. Wrong
to let the word be stepped on
or sprawl out sleeping where we walk

yet maybe from the dirt, which is just
the earth itself risen to meet us
some other vigor rises to renew
the things that language says.
Or maybe the earth reads too
and we are its puzzled archivists
wondering why we have to say so much.

14 May 2008

THE DESALINATION OF DESIRE

Saint Francis Saint Francis
was his name
but for whom
when the tear has lost its also salt
and the rousing thought of the desired one
is a mountain lake in New Hampshire only
not a ripple, a watercolor of it
signifying mountain and movement and a bird
but nothing flies and nothing moves
and that water is clear, clear all the way down.

14 May 2008

TALKING

Measure? Your cat
knows how to talk. And you
do too, not yet
the same language.
Basque meets Navajo. Listen
until you can hear nothing.

Then speak. Catness.
Humanness. Languageness.
The nervous system loops
its rosary of limitations round us
all. Parrot me, the crow
knows and chooses
the way to tell what he knows.

A sound in the sky
means direction. Follow me
says follow me says cloud
does not talk. Everything listens.

15 May 2008

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Mountain shaped sky.
Chill rain. Remembrance.
Wear a hat. A hat
or a habit. Or a rat
fleeing a metaphor.
A rain. A sky. A hill
pretending to be my head.

15 May 2008

= = = = =

Could there be anything left in me
to complain about? The set of my eyes
under brood brows, the mindset
broods on half-recalled catastrophes?

I have too much religion. Here is
a special mirror lets you look at God.
There is a road between two armies
down to a dwindling lake that still

has fish to fry for you, and salt and deep
inside each drop of it suspended are
the molecules of miracle – drink this
and ever after you'll think yourself healed.

15 May 2008

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In the measureless hotel
a blue sign winks out the window
tells a road to come close
and a room there waiting.

All my life the sign itself
has been enough for me.
No road, room, chambermaid,
newspaper, red rose, pillow.

The sign is adequate
even when it's hopelessly wrong.
Serene I ponder all day long
the gorgeous discrepancies.

16 May 2008