

7-2008

## JulB2008

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## **EVERYBODY A BELIEVER ONCE**

Then it went away I never got over it  
one way or another always grateful  
for the day for being, grace for rain  
a dance we always did or do. Here,  
please let it be here. For I do love  
the curtains of the day, the rain,  
the room you're in that lets you know it,  
the room that touches. All round about  
the incense of their offerings ascends.  
Drifts sidewise, ancient customs in smoke.  
Nobody touches anywhen. Those are  
we used to say the breaks. Or all  
these years I might have been wrong  
and brakes is what they were saying.  
Rein in the action. Make everything stop.  
What a fool that would make me now,  
all those years broken but going on.

6 July 2008

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You want to be famous, don't you?  
I can tell by the gold cat-charm on your wrist  
that you have doubts. Need luck. *Doubt*  
*is superstition* – that's your lesson for today.  
Now undress and be of use. Sleep. Sleep.

6 July 2008

## THIS LIFE

Why are biographies so short? Born this time in an old city, watched the blue flame on the gas ring – learned as much as he could from that about art, alchemy and color – the three are curiously the same, the unexamined trinity that rules our lives – grew up, wrote books and made things, passed. Fill in the details. We get a touching vignette, something to occupy a spare column-inch in a magazine. Filler. But who *was* he? Who was he before, and who will he be again? Who is he now? Why can't we read the *whole life*, not just the local apparition in this neighborhood of time? Every child is a stranger come home for the first time again. It must be something like that. Where does this street lead?

7 July 2008

*I think that every being has a jatakamala, a garland of births, we must finger and follow, bead after bead.*

*Steiner in his Karmic Relationships shows something of that, but his are the celebrated incarnations of celebrated men. And their apparitions are discontinuous in time – where were 'they' while they were not? We need those intervening lives. Total Biography, then. Right now we have, for the most part, only such instrumentation as fancy, reverie, meditation, imagination – but we must use what we have, till we have better, to follow the life of someone through lives.*

*In some life of his or mine, again and again the blue flame (now the gas stove, then perhaps a lake, a jewel, an eye, a corpse-fire on the strand) will recur, be a linking image of renewed awareness, a here-again, and this is you.*

*Seeing that blue flame he knew he was himself. We come home to what we permit ourselves to see. Really see.*

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Save it  
for your true love  
abandonment

of granite  
frontal matter  
deictic  
aftermaths—

be calm.

but why now  
so early  
of any touch

prompted ivory  
to face  
the music  
of open eye  
mere knowing

7 July 2008

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Mousehanded quick  
the workday begins  
trucks panoply rehearsed  
whine of roadbed  
smitten smote  
our mere ears. Amerika now  
mostly about noise.

7 July 2008

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Half-hemmed half-vague  
a word rolls in—

the sands of nescience  
soak a while with sense

but how can it be meaning  
if it dries out in the sun

leaving nothing behind just  
sea creatures bleached on the shore?

Or does all the speaking  
mean just that one thing?

8 July 2008

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Watching a candle  
flicker  
is not the same  
as watching light.

8.VII.08



## ORACLE

You must know by now  
I am another person  
another party to that disastrous contract  
I signed with my breath.

I also change. There, that bitter  
*et in Arcadia* we all carry  
carries me away  
from the little road and the roaring of the sea.

Everything speciates  
fast as it can. That's another  
way of saying it. I have pulled  
all my insides out for you to see

festooned every tree with what I thought.  
And left a fine resonant hollow  
afterthought to stand for me,  
to sound out all the prophecies you need.

Wind in the trees makes more sense than me.

8 July 2008

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Reading *Mont Saint Michel & Chartres* in the summerhouse. But reading it on the Palm Pilot, fuzzy little letters of Adams's grand definitions. I read about the repose of massive Norman architecture, the modesty of it. Which is not perhaps as reposeful as it first seems. The anxiety of weight, restlessness of sheer volume. I worry. I look into the morning woods round three sides of the hut. Dawn has given way to morning. Trucks on the highway ad lib in the bird choirs. Light and heat increase. The word stays where it was put, cool, sensitive. So many years.

8 July 2008

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Teaching what we don't know  
Remembering what never happened.  
Forgetting everything that did.

Measuring all this with units different for each measured thing.

Can't we measure light and sound in inches,  
something our hands know,

can't we measure love in decibels?

Or why not one measure for all things—  
then we'd really see what things are like,  
how many units of it does light make  
or love take up. Or you for that matter,  
moving on the edges of my mind?

8 July 2008

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The cock crew  
late as eight  
thirty sun  
already hours old

who could he  
be rousing  
either one of him  
over traffic skirl

such a bright sound  
out of the sky  
it must be time  
for me to sleep

I who am the opposite of the world.

8 July 2008  
[End of NB 306]

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The permission of it  
the bird of it in fact  
the close-up we've been waiting for  
her face the whole screen

her eyes and we remember  
her body a far country  
even then a faltering surprise  
as if even long ago we knew

the child of it discovering  
the rule of the senses  
those misleading distances  
we finally decided to trust.

9 July 2008

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Llul, and not mad,  
listen: the world  
is not sad as you think,  
there is a heave  
or wave runs through  
lifting yes and letting

fall. Cosmos is this.  
Not the water or its  
salt. The other thing,  
the agitation of.  
Remembering is what we  
do that comes closest  
to what it is.

The filter, and it fails.

9 July 2008

## **ESPOIR**

Not yet it seems to be not yet  
or yet to be about to be about  
time but not this time not yet

a time will come to be not yet  
to be but be about to be it will  
be yet the time not yet to be.

9 July 2008

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Let it natural as it can  
—you won't be the loser for it  
bankrupt vocabulary of I love you  
not just the language but  
the way it sticks to you.  
I have seen men die I have never seen men kill.  
Nothing is as it seems  
is all.

Of course the franchise.  
Night and day, like a song  
all too familiar, diesel smell  
bus pass, wait on the corner.  
O to be able to see a whole avenue  
so far, all the way to the beginning  
where the apartment houses  
converge on infinity.

Paradigm  
scattered when the sparrows flap off,  
mouse-quick, left alone with my fear.

Why should I keep everything away?  
Or give apparel to a needy knight?  
Am I not power?

9 July 2008



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To touch her skin  
and know: this skin speaks French!  
The shock of that. How  
could she be so different and be right here?  
I have no right to touch another language.  
Yet could it be that language  
is not even skin deep?  
Does it evaporate away like water  
leaving us to dry in the sun?

9 July 2008

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I don't know how to do  
this thing I do so well.  
It dreams me out loud  
and someone later seems  
to have it written down.  
It could be summer  
or another city, walking  
quick along the Isar  
hurrying home, huge  
nylon German flag  
obscures the window.  
Then the river turns around.  
The woman frightens me,  
talk is my only protection  
and we have no language,  
nothing that we share.  
It all comes down to language,  
even my own is terrifying,  
the gap between the words  
where anything might come.

9 July 2008

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Come slyly summerhouse  
mistress of your own quietude  
bé gone over midriff cities stay  
by sea. Rhyme more with me

your cid your campion  
tea flower robust hilltalk high  
in shadow meet and fall by there  
chamberlain of anything else

is the me in this histoire  
your easy clothes or hard design  
fill up with caterwauling ballerinas  
I knew one until your street is full

then call the hope police those bluejay  
hollerers at the brink of light's  
nationalities weird smelly kitchens  
the way their noise won't fit your ears

how hip the hour is to mere design!  
sand spill or glass break a beaker  
your experiment is on the floor as usual  
never hoist an honest sarabande

though you did hear Tell a silent shelter  
in a rain of flowers meant born again  
someone not common as you think  
lilies flush pink round noble chalices

or sliced oblique across the tip to yield  
one perfect frustrum of pure darkness  
but in the shadow that it in its turn casts  
the speartip of the lost original still points

at the proper angle origin shows through  
I wasn't asking you for consolation  
or to laugh at our shared hurt O shut  
that script our intermède is merrier

can't we ever get away from dialogue  
and find what one of us at least means  
for real that would be ocean and not neat  
the nice thing about meeting is parting soon

provocation admiration and quick release  
hie thence to each's proper wilderness  
you make it sound ugly it is only what it is  
lily-less incantation in a lost vernacular

touch forearm no tougher than a shadow.

10 July 2008