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= = = = =

Call the tower. Tell it: lower,
I can't see your eyes
from where I'm sand.

Bring ocean over. Tell her:
motion is a sickness of matter,
let the crystal ego sleep.

15 November 2008

= = = = =

Try to other side
a pick. To pluck
a hidden string and make

sing. Ask the stream
Do know
what talking is?

Do know what means?
All through the seen
invisible things

to touch. Remember
night wrapped in morning.
The empty road.

16 November 2008

= = = = =

If I trade-marked every clever
say I said I would be someone else.™

16.XI.08

= = = = =

By necessity or gravity
but sanity but levity
a darker cloud a flightier leaf.

16.XI.08

MY FACE

A.

Less and less do I like the look of my face.

B.

Stop looking at it.

Think about something else.

A.

Some other face?

One that should be mine?

Or once was mine?

B.

Or you would like to be – anything is possible.

A.

Since when?

B.

Since you first looked
at a picture of yourself
and were displeased.

A.

How so?

B.

Because displeasure rips off the Velcro
that holds the soul to what it sees.

The soul has to hide then,
under some shrubbery or in some animal,
or in some body passing on a bicycle,
on its own business, going fast.

A.

Leaving the face uninhabited?

B.

Exactly. You need
something like a dog
to bring your soul back.

A.

Dog?

B.

Something anxious and full of energy
and not too bright. Not too bright.
Something that will take the place
of a face for your soul to play with,
to play house with, inside.

A.

Could it be another part of my body
instead of a dog?

B.

Anything is possible.
Does your body have a part
that is as good as a dog?

A.

Good for what?
I'm still not sure
about the dog part,
what it's supposed to mean.
Are you sure it's not
a metaphor for something else?
I'd hate to have to go out and buy
a big smelly dog and have it around the house all day
if all I really needed was a metaphor.

B.

You're right.
I was speaking figuratively.

A.

Look what you could have done!
I might have gone out
if I'd listened to you
and bought a dog—
then where would I be?

B.

At least you'd have a dog.

A.

I don't like dogs.
That's why I don't have one,
if I liked them I would have one
and this whole thing wouldn't have come up,
at least not this way.
I'd get up in the morning and look at the stupid dog.
But now all I have to look at is my face.

B.

If you had a dog you could look at it,
that's true. But other people
would see it too. You could let passing
children play with it.
And pretty women passing by
will pat the dog and talk to it
and you will hear their voices,
enjoy their innocent caress.
And while they're busy with the dog
they won't notice your face.
And you can look at them instead.
Or you could just give it away.

A.

The dog?

B.

The face, darling, give your face away.

= = = = =

A small airplane passes over.
The doctor will see you now.

Doctor there's no me in my face
or if there is I want to be a different

person, not the one this frightened brute displays.

16 November 2008

= = = = =

Certain clouds rest now
float on top of certain trees
as if the latter were
carrying them towards me
offering to change me utterly.

16 November 2008

= = = = =

Suppose there were a house
big enough to be in
who would build it?

And more important who
would stand across the street
and watch everything

photograph the workers
lift wood or nail it down
or stone who knows what matter

workmen do or pause from
to eat their cheese in sunshine
bread beside beer cans

noon and the building soars?
We need a record of *that*
business, the big thing

between us and the horizon,
between us and the sky,
a house is our only hammer.

17 November 2008

HIDING IN PUBLIC

We can write a poem now
if only we had a now to write it in.
Yesterday there came news of apocalypse
a little boy found it on 72nd Street
rolled it into some gaudy posterbill
and whacked his little sister, “Sis,
Don’t take for granted the news—
we still too young for sex, too old for crime,
too repentant for redemption, for now—
yes, that’s where our now has gone!”
Is that the end? Soapbox announcers
proclaim yet one more religion, Nowism.
The false entry of Death
was mentioned but no one listened.
Ears pinned back by butterflies,
knees neatly gartered with Sulka ties
—the mayor flying by in an Aston-Martin
tossing Tootsie Rolls to anorexic deaconesses
knew more about the exact ratio of heart
to musculature. A man or a mouse?!
The anorectics hungering for air, a room
to lie in watching the uneventful ceiling,
found the proximity of flesh pyrrhic.

(12 November 2008
Olin, Divisional Meeting)
Edie Meidav & RK

20 November 2008

= = = = =

The place where the dead go and teach their courses
is a book the sun reads on winter morning
near-sighted sun, no one can read my heart,
near-sighted God, no one can read my mind
insofar as I exist I exist in and as an apartness
no one on or off the earth can read. Just like you.

17/18 November 2008

= = = = =

Warm on my cheek
in the cold room.

Diagnosis: sun, window,
no draft.

America
is a hill the rest
of the world has to climb.

Even now no one
knows what's on the top.

18 November 2008

= = = = =

Age changes
as we get faces.
Eventually
identity.

18.XI.08

= = = = =

I wanted to be longer but it wouldn't say.
A thousand words a day every day
yields Proust every four years. Or the same time
it takes to get a B.A. or get laid
catastrophically, June bride and bells
ring in Hell with a capital H.
Yet if I told the truth no man would listen
and every woman knows it already—
Fear is a master craftsman.
The deepest value of gold is its surface,
just the way it gleams by itself in the sun
and does something to the eye. We make
all the time, there is nothing left
unmade in the world, except leaving alone.

18 November 2009

= = = = =

Lovers waiting on a wooden bench
with slatted back and a clock over their heads,
lovers waiting while the room gets dark
and no one is there to light the lights

lovers with no candles lovers with hands
and nowhere to go but where they are
lovers because there are floors and doors
lovers because the mouth opens and closes

the mouth knows everything just watch
the mouths of lovers moving don't listen
the words are shapes that happen to other
shapes that happen to muscles to skin

a word is something happens to the mouth
the way a body happens to a bench
it sits on the way a body happens to a body
and they are together and under them is wood.

18 November 2008

= = = = =

Watch her face as the wind changes—
being brief she makes you be long—
she the haiku you the commentary—
you are a slave of her occasions,
a paltry literate, a whom remembered.

Now after years though her face
is not the one she wears. The changes
inscribed themselves, so she wears
a face no longer hers and not another's—
ridiculous that we have the same names

and so much still time dissed us here.

19 November 2008

= = = = =

Anything can come
in from the woods
and then.

 If you live
on the edge
it's always beside you

your possible
animal. Your suitor
from the sky.

Even now
because it is always
now in the woods
it could be

sizing you up,
waiting for the times
of the two of you
to be right

or maybe it's you
doing the waiting

without even knowing
to the trees and say Now.

20 November 2008

= = = = =

Getting lax in the AM
who are these people
I see their heads in my eyes
but my eyes are not me

the only accurate sentence
using pronouns says
I deceive myself

and you're another.
But I'll buy you a drink anyhow.
Or a piece of cake.
Play with me
or are you a stranger too?

20 November 2008

= = = = =

Cunning little mittens
with holes in them
no matter who
week-old cauliflower
blossoming brown mold

God put hands on trees
so light wouldn't be lonely
and lets them walk around
so earth gets some relief
from the terrible gravitas
of people just standings there
the way we do, worrying ever,
scared of making a wrong move
and there is no other kind.

20 November 2008

= = = = =

A bunch of men named Jack
and a girl named bunch of lilies
sat around in an old wooden shed
and talked about times to come

because in such dives is history
developed from a scattering
of hopes and fears mostly fears
of men wanting girls and girls

wanting to be wanted. Call it
a house. Call it a family.
Convert them to Judaism, Reform,
circumcised Baptists in other words,

trembling lambs, with knives,
Americans. And guns. Boats
sink secretly in all the lakes
soggy skeleton dreams we drink

from reservoirs but of what?
Who wrapped the world around us
like that snug sweater Aunt Edith
knitted you ridiculously long ago

you never sent a thank-you note,
just like the sky? Just walk with me
as far as the tree. I carved your name
in it once, in Braille, just in case.

20 November 2008

= = = = =

Why am I a rabbi? Let me explain.
There are quinces on the apple tree,
sheep wool on the neighbor's cat.
You have no neighbors? Tough
we'd have said in Brooklyn, but now
I empathize with your depletion.
I will move in next door to you
right now. That's my right elbow
on your hip bone, want to dance?
I don't either. A fence with a crow
on it is good enough for me. Good
neighbors put up with lots of music.
All beauty is unearthly, like a wind
making dead leaves dance. Or men.
Or do I mean a priest, some word
I read in a book that stayed behind
as sheer ammunition for an hour
when the mouth had to gasp out
something. Something demanded.
And all the tongue-wool, breath-rust,
left on you as language passes
wind up meaning something
later, don't they? You're asking me?

20 November 2008

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But there was something about a war,
a war and a woman. Buildings on fire,
howling in the night, some of it from
human throats. And some of the throats
will not be heard from again. Still,
there are always people who will sit
under an apple tree playing the flute,
that annoying instrument, ear syrup.
Even now the snakes are all asleep.
Deaf, they tell me. No flute, mute
on them. And as for us the war
is standard, the normal condition, only
the enemy changes every few years
to get us all riled up afresh. Us!
As if we were here to begin with
or end with or anytime or yet again.
Nothing is less likely than water.

20 November 2008