

1-2007

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**Biber, No.3, b minor**

1.

To hear gentle  
what had harsh

fall in spring  
foliage, a branch  
or rib controlling

the fall of sky.  
It does forgive  
me at time

when I try  
to be busy  
being it.

2.

Then her father came  
red as a butcher,  
heavy, and it's a wonder  
how such a one as she  
can have spoken from  
such a one as this,  
emerald from a muddy stream  
and then he greets me  
with a voice like lamb  
—everything sacrifices itself  
into some other. That  
is the meaning of the Sabbath  
too, and he tells me she is free  
because she is no one's hence  
she can be mind. My confusion  
makes me blush, we look alike  
suddenly ruddy, she giggles  
at earth's resemblance to herself.

3.

And that is the sorrow,  
that things turn into love,  
and suffering becomes love  
and nothing else does,

and the road to town  
runs through the wolf wood  
and the town is full of foxes  
and the sky my only roof  
and the cobblestones your bed.

16 January 2007

*g r d*

*gard* or *grad* or *gorod*      Leningrad or Novgorod or Midgard  
or garden,

**g-r-d**, a walled place, a garden, a fort for flowers,  
                  a fortress  
in the wilderness against the wild,  
against the wolves,  
                  a city.

                  A mickle garth  
against screeplings. They wait  
like wolves in the garden. The child can spot them  
easy from the crumbling terraces above.  
The problem is windows. Every word has a window in it.  
Every word but one.

16 January 2007

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Shake, listening, wanting  
only to hear  
through the bric-a-brac noises of  
the human voice  
pronouncing what  
nobody understands, or no mind  
understands and  
only the body can,

a word I'm supposed to hear.

. . . 16 January 2007

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That wall you gave me  
is just the right height  
for me to lean my forearms along  
the top of and cradle my chin  
and look over into  
whatever is beyond the wall.

My fingernails pluck at the little  
chunks of garnet we used to find  
in New York, Fordham gneiss,  
a penknife could get them out  
though, sometimes, amandine,  
color of sunset, look close  
you're telling me, don't  
look over the wall to see  
whatever is beyond a wall.  
Your wall. Earlier today  
I had written the root *g-r-d*  
meant "a walled place,  
a garden, a fort for flowers,  
a fortress in the wilderness  
...a city." Now here's the wall  
and what's over there?

Children eating sushi. Beethoven's  
*Missa Solemnis* on the radio.  
A woman overwhelmed by work.  
A man making a business of shirking,  
i.e., making things up. Like a liar  
or Apollo or Picasso or the sun  
rising any minute now on one more  
day. As far as the eye can see  
a landscape made of pretty stonewalls.  
And you behind all of them  
pretending to be made out of stone.

16 January 2007

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Crocodile, it said.  
Her face, eager  
under the loudspeaker.  
Where is the beast?

It comes when it comes,  
it doesn't belong  
to one of your sentences.  
A smile holding onto itself.

A smile holds everything back.  
Oh. Where's the animal though?  
Crocodile, it said. It comes  
when it's ready, the pool

is waiting, its water green.  
The light you see is sun  
reflected. Anybody  
knows that. Everybody smiles.

17 January 2007

Biber, No. 4, d minor Ciaconna

Where did I hear  
this heart beat before?  
Tanya in Kharkov  
heard the stone heart  
of Rodina Mat,  
Motherland's Mother  
stone heart beat  
waiting in that blue  
hour called forever  
for her children  
to come home. A statue  
is I suppose really  
a stone in waiting.  
Waiting for everyone  
in d minor, all the dead  
children she heard  
the mother she was afraid  
when the heart beat  
comes from everywhere  
there's nowhere to hide  
nowhere to hide  
from your blood  
from the desire that stands  
up like a stone  
before us, old  
obelisk a foot of snow  
around its plinth.  
Dear friend let me  
tell you one night  
about how I learned  
that word from the dead,  
*making the easy hard*  
the way a violin  
sometimes we must look  
to one another  
like pigeons on the lawn  
doves step among tree roots  
trees do that when they're thirsty  
the root comes to the surface  
and snakes along the ground until  
her fallen sons come home



from one more war and rise  
to light as water and forgive.

17 January 2007

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Call at the moment  
call. The moment  
means you. Call  
if you feel.

17 January 2007

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*Mirra* a strange opera from a play by Alfieri by Domenico Alaleona  
What am I listening to in sunlight red flowers a friend of Mompou  
Music from Paris why why is there music ever anywhere the second act  
Is trying to begin there are so many stories set to music

We used to say: don't make a song and dance about it  
What a pretty orchestral beginning here, an intermezzo before anything  
To be between, lost opera, people are always finding something

The sweetness left from before the beginning.

But now I am caught in the world who will set me free? A drumbeat  
In a Russian street. Glare of streetlight where users tarry.  
Is there an angel for every man or must I share even that with the other?  
The Other is the other end of your Angel, brother.

*Fratrem nullum habeo.* Or a brother who is cancelled out before the world.  
Why is there music anywhere?

17 January 2007

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Rubricate this:

lubricate bliss.

A scholar's delight file under A  
for delight. Everything is only one.  
All twos are on their way to three.  
Lie. Or one. Lie. Some stay.  
The hammer has no teacher  
or none but the lonely nail.  
If I wore a monocle I would  
drop it in your pocket so then  
I could see the insides of you  
at work, dark, folded, humid,  
still. But I am just a beast  
without an instrument, have never  
been nearer Key West than miles  
of red sand empty along Flagler Beach.

17 January 2007

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On the blank page  
an icterid  
assembled  
feather by feather  
and one beak.  
Warm in your hand.

17 January 2007

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Asparagus must disagree somehow  
considering. I've been thinking  
about Ted Berrigan these days,  
of days when we were young and fat  
or I was and he soon would be  
and we had not much to say to one  
another but now we do. So much.  
So many sonnet girders build us  
bridges to each other, industrial,  
blue painted, rusty, big, like the  
Goethals or Hell Gate or Sault Ste.Marie.

17 January 2007

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Not to answer the moment  
but to ask it. Isn't that  
the blue uniform I'm supposed to wear  
a small red sash a dripping  
pen in my hand  
waiting for its response?

18 January 2007

## CARPET

Sunlight through the rungs of a chair  
makes harp strings, a shadow lyre  
playing on the floor,  
fading (cloud) into the silence we call color alone.

18 January 2007



**Biber. No.5, A major**

1.

Cock crow on death's morning  
but who will die  
die again  
but there is never a first time for such things

an old woman with a bucket of suds  
how many years it takes to make that stone step clean.

2.

Children on their way to school see him  
they keep talking but softer, softer,  
as they pass the man, his strange face  
so quiet with pain, what can it mean,  
all alone, climbing the mild hill,  
his breath speaking louder than their words  
but they know enough to keep talking,  
talk never listens, to keep something  
quiet in their hearts then look away.

3.

Happening. Cars idling, rolling slow  
across broad squares, slowing  
before minor traffic accidents, dawn.  
In someone's backyard a rooster  
sounds off, we are prisoners here,  
trapped but keep going, giving out  
little signals lost in a world of signs.

4.

Everything lets me. If I put  
one foot before the other  
I will get there. I will wear  
my black suit, a pale shirt,  
I will still care what you  
and all your kindred think of me,  
I will keep moving, call  
it walking or forgetting or  
just getting to you, muscles

still obedient to mind,  
I call it a dance to carry  
the Torah up the street,  
no one sees the velvet  
bundle in my arms, I hope  
you can see it when I come  
and only if you do  
will I know it's you.

18 January 2007

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Meek mind  
what waits?  
a mumbled miracle.

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(just at waking – as if in criticism of whatever poem I would stumble downstairs to write in a minute or two...)

**Biber, No. 6, c minor**

1.

So many cuts  
wounded fingertips  
winter winter sun  
on powder snow  
a painfulness  
at the tip of things  
a little cough  
trying to forget  
the lungs, the book  
says we begin to die  
the minute we're born

2.

and then run faster  
to meet the place  
your father is

a permanent identity  
eludes you  
you fall asleep on the train

and wake up elsewhere  
shivering with cold  
who are these people

what time is it?

3.

Somewhere at the back of the mind  
there seems at time to be a tune  
you've heard before – that's all.  
All you have to go on. Flowers  
tell you less than nothing: colors  
distract you from finding  
the dark track you're supposed to use.  
Good slide! they cry at New Years  
as if you were somewhere to begin with  
and could slip even further down

and maybe should. Could it be  
that one is too high for the world?  
And the friendly voices of scary travelers  
call you down. Down with us,  
where the stone's already waiting.  
Now we are moving over. Now we make  
room for you, for even you. And here  
is a cat or something playing by your feet.

19 January 2007

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Another mind here to say so  
if from elsewhere who here?

A bottle of ink explodes on Neptune:  
the blots spatter here, fall as words,  
liquid tries to focus, water tries to be lines,  
lines try to be signs, signs try to say.

All afternoon we watched the ice at Clermont  
little pools among the leaves  
scribbled inward with design.

We stood in the presence of a vast  
provisional library we had only  
the fading daylight left to study,

to learn that alphabet and guess  
in what language someone wrote it  
and still have time to read.

19 January 2007

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Places  
to have been  
whereafter  
something thought

wild red hair and a habit  
tossing wine into the air  
in hopes Melchizedek himself  
would sip it on the way out or down.

19 January 2007  
Kingston