

1-2007

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= = = = =

Excitement is a walk.  
Knowing is being there.  
But what is running,  
my Viennese? Always  
stopping to eat. Currywurst,  
sharp mustard, rough  
stone of the Opera House.  
Cold wind.

25 January 2007

= = = = =

Bread is a map.  
Dogs follow you,  
it is bad luck  
to see something  
red, bad luck  
to speak, worse  
to be spoken to.  
You think too  
much. I need a cup.

25 January 2007

= = = = =

It is bad luck to be someone.  
You could have gone all the way  
without a hat. Your aunt  
would warn you over and over  
about the rocking chair  
the way you moved it  
when it was empty. Scaring.  
About the parrot whose eyes  
somehow were sewn shut.  
It was magic. How can such  
things be? And why?  
What is being kept out  
of the world when we can't see?  
Later a man from Brazil  
told you the same story.  
But he had only magic –  
no brick fireplace like hers,  
no faux-log fire, no tiny  
quivering actual blue flames.

*Cecelia Parry*

*Carlos Castaneda*

25 January 2007

**Biber, No.13, d minor**

1.

So many names  
where did you get them all?  
Where shall we put them all?

I will sit here watching  
till the last one comes in,  
I will not bother counting them,

it's enough that one of us knows  
and this one is you.  
I will know it when it comes

because it will tell me so.  
Because things do.  
The seagull above my head

screams its name again and again,  
signing all the astonishing caprices  
it sonnets in a cloudscape

we can barely make out down here.  
Everything says its name.  
I breathe it out too, the one I mean.

2.

Can we do it  
together? All these buses,  
mulberries, euro coins,  
hard to keep the colors straight.

What country were we in  
when we began?  
Or are we there yet,  
cornfield full of miracles.

3.

Hop on the train then

see if all these rails  
can find it, with all their  
remorseless convergences,

o symmetry! They  
persuade us all the time  
that where they go  
is where we want to be

unconvinced, we wander  
through a fallow field  
that looks like any other  
field. The sky. The bird.

4.

Then it was night. The conspirators  
–bat, hedgehog, worm– consulted  
with the mirror and the church bell  
and knew that this time they will win.

No dawn for you, little thorp,  
little thatch on sleepers' rooves,  
no noise of horse's hooves  
will ever rouse you.

Then they slept too.

26 January 2007

## THE, OR A, OR AN

The article comes late  
to language. Before that  
we had to know  
how many of a thing  
the word intended,  
a dog, the dog, dogs,  
all dogs that ever were.  
Latin had none, Russia  
has none now. What to do?  
Dog. Enough. Barking  
not too near. Fear.  
Wheel broke on cart  
or all the wheels on all my treks  
and we will never get there.  
Where?

26 January 2007

## FOREST PATH

Am I ready for the anything  
he asked and examined  
himself distracted by what seemed  
from the marble sky some dust  
was sifting down quiet blacktop  
“Commuteeless morning  
in the fact of thing,” he  
reported to himself, displeased  
by this display of wordy brevity.  
“Only the natural knows  
how to be long. It has a right  
to repetition. We must take  
brevity as the soul of art,  
the human thing, the contradiction.”  
By now though the snow had forgotten.

27 January 2007



**Biber, No.14, D major**

1.

The acrobats have finally come  
and we are undecided.  
Nimble they may be but o so bodily.  
Don't know if we can bear  
such bare manhood, womanhood,  
enterprising in our public space  
where hiding is normal, where God  
has a cross or two set up to mark  
where he died. But these are alive!

2.

Everything is a different shade  
of the same color, like night  
but full of light. What can  
this picture be? Did they see  
this way in the old days,  
in greys and blacks, did the world  
inherit color only late in life  
like an old man called to the throne  
when his grandmother finally died?  
Or is this playful world we see  
around us just one more trick?  
Local technology? Nobody can  
remember before now. Did they  
have red back then? Or blue?

Maybe we are weary now with choosing  
and the traffic out my window now  
just old snapshots tricked to jerk along,  
pretend to move, old flipbook, no more  
natural than a church organ or a hand.  
And will we get past color some day too,  
like telegrams and typewriters, go  
back to the racy world that Atget shows  
when muscles had to do the work we set colors to.

3.  
Hurry. Speculation  
breaks the mirror  
and lets the ghosts out

they speak Irish  
and hurry by themselves  
and for themselves

drink our milk  
and bite our shoes  
and leave strange

ribbons in our trees.  
Hurry the horror  
the mirror the quick.

27 January 2007

## LISTEN A WHILE AND THEN FORGET

This was Mozart. This was ashes  
falling in Aunt Celia's grate,  
a story she told about Indians,  
her nose, a parrot, a blue flame.  
This is Chinese food. This dark  
commodity is pigeon's blood  
use it the way we use parrots  
listen or a magnifying glass.  
It is not time to shave or forgive.  
The wounds of recency never heal:  
once young always young. Even you  
old to begin with die immature.

About Time really nothing is known.  
It's just a file name for all our forgetting  
if it is even that. This is Mozart  
in the sense of pay attention but  
no one knows who he is or where.  
Where is his house? About Being  
nothing is known. Only atheists  
need Sunday, that pale highway  
where nothing happens. God's  
vengeance on human experience.  
Again and again. Again is made  
by weeks. By measure. And all  
we have to measure is us. No  
actual pigeon was harmed in this house.

28 January 2007

**Biber, No.15 C major**

1.

All the measurement is done.  
The sun is ready to infect the day  
with the dream of seeing. Illusion  
is not the worst of it. Remembering  
is worst, the ones who are not alive  
and wondering if they ever were in me  
deep enough so all their losses  
could be found in me.

2.

That doesn't say it clearly. Help is a house  
in winter. A hand inside my hand  
perfectly fits. My fingers drum on the tabletop  
as if impatient. But the only thing  
they're thinking anxiously of is wood.

Let there be thing  
when I come there

let the shadows at least  
look like names I know

heads of hair I spot  
in a crowd and cry out

there is Mary now.

But the song doesn't run along that street  
it slowed down near the ruined temple  
and watched children playing ringalevio,  
What else do we leave them to inherit?  
A self-portrait painted when he was  
one hundred and three years old,  
just his face on some hide  
a god had ripped off a myth, a man.

The song stops there.  
Veronica buries her face  
in the soiled cloth  
and his face soaks into hers,  
To see him these days  
we have to look in every woman's face.

3.  
Can I come over  
after the day is finished  
and use your house  
to clean my dream?

*You are the one*  
it told me, in so loud  
a voice I couldn't tell  
if it meant me

who listened or you  
to whom I speak now,  
couldn't tell who or whom,  
just like with music.

4.  
We were talking about the sun.  
The unknown star.  
It has risen.  
A bird on a branch  
is big enough  
to blot it out.

Branch of my tree  
deliver me.  
When you see your friend  
outlined against the morning sun  
you know this is heaven.  
Sambhogakaya Christ  
between two thieves:  
disciples, that means,  
those who take the  
teacher's words and run away.

28 January 2007

**Biber: The Sixteenth Sonata, or *Passacaglia***

It has begun even without wanting to  
and it has taken me by the hand  
and it has led me up the street  
past the butcher and the dry cleaner  
the flying red horse of the gas station and  
it has crossed me to the far pavement  
drug store vacant lot where it is winter  
and it takes me and my sled to slide

and it pulls me up the long street  
to the school and leaves me there  
finally among other people there are always  
people there but it does not tell me  
their names, it doesn't tell me yet  
that names are important, only the street,  
the street is important, never leave  
the pavement, it left me here and went away  
so far away I can't even imagine it  
will ever come back and yet at nightfall  
I am somewhere else, does the street

do things like that by itself? It takes me  
home, I am an afterthought of architecture,  
something to lend scale and motion  
of a place, only place is permanent,  
there is no place in the world without a place,  
place must be the one who leads me,  
place I mistook for my mother's hand,  
the place is a hand that carried me  
and carried you too to our inconclusive  
but exciting rendezvous, all silk  
and hurry, it led us together and apart,  
it let the sun out of the sky and chained  
it down at night, it gave me a voice  
but no will, what I do is what it  
bids me to, the bakery, the hardware store,  
the public library, the firehouse, the old  
tired salesman beside a spotted window

full of very white dried salt fish.

28 January 2007



= = = = =

I am at that bright  
place known beginning  
sun in whose eyes  
through a red flower

(just like the 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
beginning, red-flowered,  
when Left meant right)

but now it's just me  
nobody is talking to  
a few vessels  
left out on the porch overnight

as a prudent housewife  
sets out her lamb stew  
to cast its fat  
risen to the top thick white in the cold night

– we have been living here  
long enough to guess the weather,  
nothing more.

Sun on roofbeam  
like a new bird.

Cat at door.  
Some or all of what I say  
is on the brink of the imaginary,  
the beautiful unexciting imagined place  
where things are quietly just as they are  
and no girls with eyes like raccoons  
leap down on us from the moon.  
I have no cat, for instance,  
but the sun as I said is shining.

29 January 2007

= = = = =

The shot-down duck  
came to life  
in the hunter's fridge,

wing broke, leg broke  
but alive, I heard it quack  
on TV, a brown

marsh duck,  
two days in the freezer  
woke and spoke.

*Refrigerium*, a limbo  
a place to be renewed  
on the edge of life

until your Easter come.  
Poor duck, Saint Duck,  
somebody says somebody

is taking care of it now  
in a *sanctuary*, holy place,  
where all its pain

hides in our vocabulary.

29 January 2007

= = = = =

Sailing not through a time  
but long *demand*, diamond  
for an enquirer, hold this  
(and every this) between  
your hands and see.

I like the way the lawn  
is spelt today, every  
consonant in its place  
snug as Slavic and my  
breath free to scatter  
them and through them,  
'them' being all there is.

All of you. Axes  
align the light, otherwise  
we'd never get to see  
through all these trees.  
Diamond. Now frame  
carefully in mind a query  
you want this oracle to solve.  
Let it dissolve along your  
alveolum like a tune  
you know better than to  
whistle in this stuffy  
solemn church of the world.

Now squeeze the stone and see  
the vast machinery from which  
you stood too long aloof.  
Go, ask anyone for help. Don't  
let pride stand where greed should  
run. Ask, acquire, focus, demand,  
aspire. Remember Alexander!  
Though neither of us is able  
right off the bat to remember why.

30 January 2007

= = = = =

This quiet sun that all life gives.  
But it could time.  
It could become: this quiet sun  
that's all life gives.

And that would in turn be true  
and good enough in such dark wood.

31 January 2007

= = = = =

Not much horizon  
in this valley in a valley.  
Bare trees in snow  
augur a *receding*.

Towards the unbounded  
that light itself  
demonstrates and denies.

Morning. Fragile  
winter sun. All  
the branches busy

with white writing.

31 January 2007