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Old stone is a hook to hold the head
crumble of a Norfolk cliff the fact
I was born for something and
this might be that but wait.
What are they telling me now
about the night? What shall I be,
a skier or a civil engineer, something
to do with balances. With thrust.
Each moment the day grows brighter
so that must be part of the message,
a code built of increments alone,
a plain text hidden in the light?

1 April 2007

APRIL AFTERNOON

I was hoping to be close
but it is cold.
A grey light knows.
It tastes like salt.

1 April 2007

= = = = =

Always something. The dust
walks beneath the bed. Always
some store is closing you thought
you would do business in. Always
business. Always needments,
notions, philosophies. Never
what you need. Never only me.
The answer one. The Fool
according to Tarot. But according
to astrology a weeping man.
And from his tears electric power
comes, that spins from drums
in the great hydroelectric installation
in Dnieperpetrovsk. The hum
stays in your head as you sleep.

1 April 2007

= = = = =

How purity happens
it is justice does it, a brick
still warm from the oven,
a hat on a stick

these necessary accidents
by which we are spilled

virtue is an embarrassment of truth.

What can we do with our dreams
who can shepherd them, dress them
decently so that daytime aunts
are not ashamed of their nephew
dreaming how once a week
an angel comes and pees in the mikvah

and what makes the pool so holy
is shocking to the rest of us
even the little boy when he wakes
uncounselled into ordinary shame.

2 April 2007

= = = = =

Cast on such wan demeanor
the peak of a noble nose – eagle
or Minerval, a gaze to match.

Stormtroopers always ready
for rapture. Then there is a rail,
the bird that stepped

fearless on a sandy path, the thicket.

2 April 2007

Circulations also

of the rose

spin the wheel, who
cares what you think about mercy
you who have been so many governments
beg only to be left alone.

No alone left
on this planet,
you didn't do it them
it edited it
itself and the clamor of summer night was stilled.
Only paid-for music ruled.

*

Cheer up, it's only weather.
Yes, but weather's all there is.

No, maybe weather's all you've got.
Could there be a weather beyond weather?
aither over metarsia ever.

*

Grey morning.
The light on the street
heals. Want
to leap into the other.
Leave somebody else to be me.

3 April 2007, Boston.

= = = = =

The sense record, how politics
Is polis is a mound of dirt
Heaped up to keep the other out,
Hence paranoia, politics
Is by nature paranoid, the city
Is run by the police. The mark
Made. So the resistance, the resistance
Is the essence of what we do, the flow
Outward to the other, saying You
To whom these words come, you
Are more important than I am,
You are the holder of my breath.
The city has no breath I think.

3 April 2007, Maine

= = = = =

The glad of gone is to be here. To find
a place where nowhere tells. Indians
were here. They still own
the pronouns of our dreams.

Something happened, a pause in the weather,
the shift. Children adventure the port of
storms. To be at peace with one's size,
not easy. The brutal commas of recrimination.

What a pamphleteer would write
if I could still read. Wake, window,
and walk me to the light! My mother
was an Indian. She is forgiving me still.

4 April 2007, Orono

= = = = =

To be loved at all
in any means means
a heart-shaped habit
cut from the flurry

from all the busywork of day
a single thought arising
shaped like the one
on love's mind, love

is all mind, the midden
body does its job,
links conjoin, time
hurries past and the heart-

shaped habit holds.
Love is an animal
no sense of time at all
or all its time is why not now.

5 April 2007, Orono

= = = = =

What I never said
is my skater's waltz,
I rode a bicycle last night
I walked west on 42nd
with a scissors in my hand,
a big pair, red-handled,
bright, big as Jim Dine,
what must they have thought
to see a man so armed
cutting the air into
diamonds and pearls?

5 April 2007, Orono

THE DETERMINANTS

Skilled for, or sculpted, the parts of numbers
That hook on to other numbers
Are only parts. The other parts
Consort with nothing not even themselves.
These are the determinants. The seven
Of seven, sixless, eightless, void
Of forty-nine, cubeless, rootless, *sept.*
The terminations of our love affairs
Are predicted by these orders or domains
Within numbers. They count nothing
Neither forward nor back. They tell us
Come now, it is time to go.

5 April 2007, Orono

= = = = =

Turbulence of course as anchor
A hermit in a strange hat
Comes towards you over the deck.
On these seas every
Word has several senses as
A stick always has two ends
No way to point out without
Being pointed at, or out, or will you
Grace me with your company around
A stroll? There are no apple trees
Growing from the sea so
She said yes. You did, now don't
Deny it, did and gave it to me
Later and I did eat. What fruit?
Of solitarinesse the world was made.
A lonely agent in a funny hat
Is a suspicious hurry hastened it
Chaste into place. The earth
Is permanently virgin. This
Only is my creed. Virgin to do
And to be done. Geology is all of me.

5 April 2007, Orono

= = = = =

The thing I can't don't be or did
The eye-full trader who lisked her way
Down the conundrum of the subway
Where one sat half-gozzled in the morning light
That also makes its way down stairs.
Where past years are. There are no others here,
Only the simulacra of the same, and for sale.
The car shimmies, the readers lost in libraspace
Sway on vinyl, read their way to work
And back again, the frantic silence
Of the printed page in which they pour
The scraps of their fugitive attention
And they bless the one who wrote it,
The tunnel of escape from where they sit
Hurling from contingency to consistency
The unchanging boulevard of bedroom
Home. Now tell me what year it is.

5 April 2007, Orono

LUNCH IN MAINE

Eating connects you
with the oldest things.

When you eat
you are participated.

The whole town
melting in my mouth.

ca. 5 April 2007

THE MAINE ONTOLOGY

Necessity of me: the iron curtain
among the sleepy metaphors
the cat in the corner smirks.

So many arguments
to fill a sailor with the sea,
sell him down under what he presidents,

write a bitter serenade—
what is the word for 'me' in Paradise?
The little white plush dog falls to the floor.

Birch trees among the softwoods dark.
Trees are shadows that have roots,
colors bonded to their things.

O sad clock of inveterate billiardiers
clicking away while the balls snooze
along the green to find their destined holes,

Rot Cod, a bag to hold sick balls in
a sphinx to squeeze me always me.
It all comes back to the unlikeliest

the sheen of paradise spilled
off the skin of local apples,
my troubadour.

5 April 2007, Orono

GOOD FRIDAY RIDING SOUTH

against the grain, the slim
miracle of time, pursuing.
Radians of disbelief,
you can have a wall
without a mouse, a mouse
without a house. All our
agreements reach up the sky
like a man falling down
in the street. Quizzical
certainties – Brian’s angry
penguins mass on the Yalu,
something’s going to happen
to history. Half a word
is as good as a sleep, such
language, the language!
They forgive Williams eloquence
coz he was a regular guy.
I am the unforgiven, I woke
up on the wrong side of the tracks,
hid, was shy, took shelter
in forbidden operas, poetry’s
eloquent blasphemies.
Never much regular about me,
I’m not an elitist I’m neurotic—
can’t they tell the difference yet?

6 April 2007, Orono

GENESIS

It is enough to begin
for the line to sound.

6 IV 07, Gloucester

HOLY SATURDAY 2007

The sun in the window.
My mother would be 105 today.

Who could be my mother again,
the Christmas cactus

unaccountably heretic
blooms wildly for Easter

which is the real Christmas anyhow
to be born full-grown articulate

from death's brief womb
and stand for a while

on ordinary earth. The beauty
of it, of just this.

Who was my mother again,
the woman clean from my charnel memory

stands again as once before
above me, I am born from everything.

7 April 2007, Boston

SLEEPING WITH VOLCANOES

Sauntering among sulfurs, philosophers
know there is no path to self-knowledge
like abandoning the self. Empedocles
demonstrated this on Etna, vanishing
into bubble smoke and mystery
like Oedipus in his cooler pine grove,
without a self a man becomes a rock.
But what happens to women who sleep
with a volcano? They think they wake
later and hurry down the lava slopes
of the one they've been, run faster
menaced by fireballs and scoria
flaming after them, my dream, she thinks,
only my dream. Then she wakes up
from waking up and understands, once
one has slept with a mountain
there is no ordinary left, let alone
a mountain full of fire. She is who
she is forever now. No change. Heat
is part of her, the obsidian glare
stares quiet from her eyes. Now
she is the mountain for all others.
To clamber up. To interview. To fall.

(begun 7 IV 07 Boston)

BLANDFORD ELEGY

The marriage of snow with rock face
sheltered north face of south cliff
holds what there was. Changeless
nature. Who was your father?
What war did he permit?
The water of the middle
becomes the milk of the extremes,
so many highways, roads
are peddlers of religious tracts,
follow narrow lines to ecstasy.
The destination disguised as heaven
and we hurry.

But who are we?

We need some paraclete of thieves
to make us feel good about all
we've stolen: name, profession,
color of eyes, religion, race.
None of that is ours. All of them
are ours. What can we do?
No wonder death presents itself
as a viable alternative to quandary.
We all make free with the words
of some other, then someday we
are called upon to pay up
for what we've borrowed. Woe
to us, who think the sea is flat.

8 April 2007, Massachusetts