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What can you say to the ones who don't talk?
Say alligator crocodile the difference the little hill
in sunlight over the sunflower fields near Cavaillon
does that make sense can you hear me
I will assume silence means assent
you have agreed to the world and I am in it
you have taken my hand in marriage now I am yours.

22 April 2007

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(answering an image of Tom's, e-mail)

The napkin folds
over and over
on itself, and when
the waiter flicks it open
more napkin, nothing
but napkin

can a
poem be like that
a word folded over
nine times on itself
isn't that the limit,
paper, carpet, a book
on the lap of a woman
fallen asleep reading it,
the cloth of words?

22 April 2007

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Blue flowers, a knoll. Facing them.
Being in one's own place. Only a moment
is or could be. One is a one
so menaced by elsewhere.
In the heart, that sumptuous Reception,
one is a child in a cattle car.
Flower calm, the looking. The flowers
see one. Skyblue like over
as if one were caught between skies.
The rings on one's fingers glow
at midnight to vouchsafe morning.
Outside and proud of it. Exiled
from dream. A flower is an interruption
different from silence, or a silence
with color in it. One's space fills with it
habits of thinking. Bumble
bees all around frost-nipped buds.

22 April 2007

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So let me be lord of separations and a dog,
a dog is dependency and resentment,
I seem to be one of those who reject
any love that can't help loving—
so hating dogs *is* hating god, is hating
some narrow kindness in the world,
that sunshine of which my skin is so suspicious.

22 April 2007

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You don't need to know
what happens to me,
sight of a long-ship
sailing under my lawn
hurrying to be there
in Viking time,

 here weather
marries fantasy, their children
are cathedrals, stone shadows,
broken statues in the desert,
signifiers limitless as sand.
Our business is to make the sand.

22 April 2007

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Haven't caught the tune yet
to go on. Mystic breakfast,
Andaman Islanders learn to dance.

Forty inches deep in my aunt's
living room. This is true, I dreamed it,
I showed her on my belly

how high the water was.

22 April 2007

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The pleasantry, a kind
of unloaded arquebus – you see
the point of it, you understand
the aggression, you smell the smoke
but you don't bleed.
Or no more than stars fall on a summer night.

22 April 2007

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Caryatid. I will dream about her thighs
holding the sky up. I will dream a quiet temple
and fill it up with priestesses
tearing certain books into scattered pages
snowing the scraps along the nave.
Translucent alabaster. Only the pages
so torn to shreds become the books that we call holy.

22 April 2007

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Will dream drown in own power,
will collaborate with shadow
to spell a dingy church and sit in it
moping eastward with mere think?

Hope-hobbled, close to the dim ever,
still proceeds. As in a piscine blue
seldom means sky so in a mirror
no one in particular is meant

not even you, the long scary antics
of mercury only or by this wound
know the war is won that's not begun.

23 April 2007

THE ADVOCATE

And on the side of the Night appears
that celebrated orator the Mockingbird
whose voice we heard just before
full dark, arguing plausibly as ever
that no one really needs the light,
visual event is a mere pleasantry of God,
a sweet enough distraction from our
proper business, which is learning
at last how to hear by touch, and touch
by hearing. All the rest is wind
and water stuff, and never lasts.
But what once holds your skin
is permanent. Touch lasts forever.

23 April 2007

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Can we meet this forward
into now? A letter
from the pope again, a seal pup
dead along the shore
no visible wound. Sometimes
things die.

The Dharma
is everlasting, my teaching of it
will last five thousand years
then disappear the Buddha said.
And it's always up to you –
who else is there to live you?

People persuading people,
trapped in the identity of ownership.
And now it's cold. Now
the blue flowers. Now it's hot.
Not.

Now is the most elusive
country, a time absent
in the core of itself.

Listen,
it keeps wanting me to say.
But who is speaking? Loosen,
loosen language by listening.
The sentence has never stopped
speaking yet, how
can we know what it means?

24 April 2007

= = = = =

Hang the wound on the wall.
And be wall. Listen to all the unlikely
arguments. a spurt of cloud
almost or air kiss. How close
are we to where it has to start?

Don't worry about the color of the mind,
time is ink enough. Eric Gill's
stations of the cross in the cathedral—
only a line can talk about desire,
about agony. Pain
happens to beauty and what then?

Then the stone rolled away—
and no one can see the stone again
except in dreams, on Thursday nights
after pillow chapel, a fat stone
a turnip of a rock still
rolling downhill from where he launched it,

presumptuous mineral
that would enclose a man! Do you think
you are a woman, boulder? Go on
falling or rolling or whatever you mean,
cars race along the highway trying to catch up.

24 April 2007

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Why is this thing where it is
where the Queen can't find it
looking out her little window
where the King comes suppliant
once a day to ask for breath?

A is for authority. A is for air
can't have one without the other,
he kneels and puts his mouth to glass,
tries to breathe in. Air is an image—
we breathe in what we see.

Blind men breathe only memory.
Or blind men don't breathe. Language
breathes for them. When I was young
they sent me to a class for the blind
they do things like that, I ran away

to where sparks from iron wheels
ground on the steel rails above my head
that was enough, that was the el, that was street,
was visible, was the activity of light
scraping down through the skull and I saw.

24 April 2007

THE SECOND THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE, CALLED HOPE

Nearer to the line marked Fall
nearer to thee the chassis travels me
still stiff as a pine tree and as far
everything is war. What does love say?
Says I. You are the shadow only
of such remarks. Nobody
can put up with that for long.
Chassis indeed, no matter where it goes.
Till dust bestrew it and evening fall,
the hour between the wolf and the whimbrel,
midnight, something stirs. It's light
you fool, itself, it's wide awake,
it's eight o'clock, forgo your tedious
Decadenza, over this grey Hudson
cruise ghosts of dead sailors
roistering down the drunken avenue.
Do you remember, master, when men
wore pants and certain citizens
unlike them skirts and folderol?
That was imperial, that was, that was time,
and white was the color of our flag,
we yielded pronto and battened on surrender.
Compliance, sweet principle of Yes!
Yes is still an option here, a fireplace
in every parlor, a blue bird on every tile,
a windmill runs the weather and the mayor's dead.

25 April 2007

WONDER

But what is the wonder?
Is it the caul round the newborn calf
that tells us all prophecy is in the meat?

Is it star? How close we always are
to not knowing. That is the beauty part,
straight pine sapling, the apple

lightly balanced on your palm.
We think about things a long time
and then they quietly come.

25 April 2007

FASTI

Tell me these quiet things
do or not do the day
allows. There is a silence
built in believe it.

Find. For yourself.
The opening is any door
you carry with you
all the time.

Space always reminds.
Even the least distance
has a heart, beat,
renewal. Pause.

Things let you
isn't that enough
the baker the farmer
the brother the wife

that's it the point
is to wife. The rest
follows naturally.
The door. The day.

26 April 2007

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Too quiet. The verge in matter
speaks where the glacier was. Prong.
Through the sediments a pressure
cross-purposes with our sense of river.
Sacrifice. Fire is all the wet we have to give you.

27 April 2007

= = = = =

As though there were another chamber
hidden in this meek house

where violet magics
burn against the mirror

and everything to saw in it
becomes you ever after

a king on her throne
an abyss from which small
not untuneful voices rise.

27 April 2007, KTC

= = = = =

This is the king's highway the king never trod
this is the elephant's mounting block
no one ever climbed. This is the sky
no one ever saw.

It waits, they all wait, inside you now
for the blossoming moment to invent itself.
Sometimes you lose the path, sometimes
sparrows rise from the dead leaves and tear at your face.

27 April 2007, KTC

= = = = =

The chances of something else pouring
out of the glass you poured rum into,
remote. But there is always something
coming out of the radio like music
you can never tell. Spiridon, a name
that comes to mind, Christian, Greek,
a writer of theology perhaps, a chronicler
of lascivious Byzantines. Don't you wish.
Transformation is what this is all about
though, you do know that, you do pour
something in and something else comes out
but you can't taste it. Only the hearer can,
that ardent deity you live to please. Please.

27 April 2007

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Cast of a small engagement, actors
you'll never remember, a plot
you will never forget. What kind of action
is it has no people in it
any more? Summer stock. What's left
when nothing's left. Why does
my arm hurt, why does a motorboat
remind me of a time before I was born,
there is enough breath in the world
to say everything. Slow though,
like an elephant's eye, turning to see
who pretends to guide it now.

27 April 2007

= = = = =

The trout's bright opaque eye—
he saw something after he died
he tries to tell me—

everything is quick

death tunes a dial,
 the machinery of soul
 never changes,
only the program content somewhat does.

27 April 2007