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## LAMMAS ON EARTH

We are not animals

we are among them we study them  
to be at home  
as they are and never are

And of course angels were aliens are aliens  
we know that from the word  
an angel is a messenger  
what is a messenger a messenger  
is one who carries a message from elsewhere

a true message or false message exciting or legalistic  
it doesn't matter what matters  
is that a message proves and only proves  
the existence of elsewhere

we are not animals or we are animals from elsewhere  
that much I know  
that much I knew from studying in my childhood  
the golden wrong-way telescope eyes  
of lions and leopards

they are the heart of earth we somehow poor lostlings  
are the heart of sky.

1 August 2007

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What we see when we see  
is we are seen.

That is the blue  
(green) of the eye,  
that is the you of the my

when it is said you see me or I  
am trying to see you and not just see

but be there for the seen.  
That is why it is so terrible to be blind

the blind cannot be seen.  
So while the light lives in the eyes

the whole of someone fits in the eyes of another.

1 August 2007

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**But enough of angels**  
we can never have

the turn of the old rope  
over the creaking winch  
hauls new water

turns out we can drink everything  
this bucket world this sheer blue thing

they come down and heaven us no matter who.

1 August 2007

= = = = =

**Not being anymore.**  
Or sleep sleep.  
That way small  
heartsmug breathless  
small not more.  
It is to ache  
from loneliness  
for what one was.  
*Ich vermisse mich*  
the closest it comes.

1 August 2007



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Armchairs easy come alive.  
She won't listen to my hysteria anymore  
as if the furniture intended something.  
I tell you the floor is up to no good  
and the shirt on my back is full of disease.  
A dog died of it. Just look at the Adirondack  
chair its arms grapple towards you,  
those blunt splintery hands.

In hell the furniture also walks around  
but the people are motionless, not even the air  
knows how to move.

Just the tables and writing desks  
the huge chests of drawers and hungry closets.  
Only things that got made and then escaped  
into the move world.

No, it's not like that at all,  
it's like this. I am sick.  
Children on a carousel  
cut the wooden horses' throats  
but nothing bleeds,

the steam pipes of the calliope  
scream for the police,  
and I am no better.

The machine is defective from the factory,  
all the mistakes built in.

Deliberate.  
The planned obsolescence of the human body's life.

The children worry that the horses do not bleed,  
still prance up and down.

The machine  
runs on running. It has no thought to stop.  
We think it all the time.

The children  
jump off and scatter, some fall,  
brush off the scraped knees and all experience

and run off into the dark interior.

1 August 2007



## AN APOLOGY

*for C*

Coming close to the becoming  
as a crow. A spate  
of grass go listen to  
not barter. I will never  
do it again, Peitho  
is the cruelest goddess.  
*I persuade* no more.  
A crow calls  
and leaves it at that.  
Leave it at that.

2 August 2007

== = = = =

Could it be anything, like a vise grip  
or a hand saw, where two things  
know each other and their kiss  
is somehow permanent: each  
infected by the other stays,

could it be so simple, that a touch  
is somehow permanent, that a grip  
that a hand did infected the other  
like anything touching anything  
and not changing after, ever?

*I send you one for each finger  
the shortest one is what makes you me.*

No, wait. When a string gets knotted  
you use fingers to untie it. But when the fingers  
themselves get knotted together  
where will the hummingbird come from  
that knows so deftly to unravel them?

2 August 2007

= = = = =

*A night to come*  
*The hollow of your hand arrayed with ancient alphabets*

And even this might be enough to know:  
the brittle branches of the yew tree  
that does not know how to die: always

some life's inside, the heartwood, the hope.  
*The shape of all that we remember*  
*topples towards waiting, towards desire*

because no other landscape sustains us.  
When I look into the dark varnished background  
of the painting I see you there,

just a little pallor of a human face in all that green  
and you are speaking to me. Hear  
what you say: *An enormous hillside overcast with blue*

and gently we struggle towards the rounded top.  
Where there are more dark trees, a place so deep in shade  
*there are no shadows, not a trace of who we were*

when we started up, only of the dark ones,  
or maybe one, that we will become  
when we get to the end of *waiting*, of our climb.

2 August 2007

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Lady Catastrophe  
all fallen bridges  
lead to you

you are the sudden  
acceleration  
of karmic consequences

when all the causes  
suddenly take effect  
at once

And all the faces  
I've collected  
in so many piazzas  
all turn into yours.

3 August 2007

= = = = =

The light is a thing

it catches us  
like corn or wheat  
the wind moves through

and through the waves of it  
some people move  
coming towards us  
with closed eyes.

We close our eyes to meet them.

3 August 2007

## PARTICULARS

As of a census to note down  
the *intimate behavioral horoscope*  
of a given man like me.  
Choices, tastes, preferences—  
the sum of all which  
will disclose what?

These matters are the shadows of his stars,  
the quiet spoor or traces of his zodiac  
as he passes, with all the others, all the  
every other through their shared conjuncture  
in the fallen world, this world that rises again.

If I take myself as the object here, I think it's terribly sad that I will go to my pyre  
with so much left unknown to the human world, unknown even to those who live  
with me and know me best. And a like ignorance in me will hide from me their  
own particulars.

As I make my morning coffee, I think how partial I am to the cheap stainless  
demitasse spoons you pick up in France (Champion at Morzine, €1- for six). They  
speak to me of thrift, of a land where good coffee is —or was in the pre-Lavazza  
days— more common, of Alps, of humility, simplicity. And they do please me.  
Charlotte prefers the heavier, costlier, glossier Italian spoons, graceful, rounded  
and sturdy – while mine are flimsy, stamped out of sheet steel. And yet.

Now these little spoons that make me happy, a tiny but palpable happiness, now  
and again all day long, these are elements among the ten thousand particulars that  
figure in my earthly identity.

Sometimes I think that all we are is our particulars. I am nothing but my little  
spoons et cetera. Who are you? I ask this stranger, and he tells me I like to wear  
red shirts on Tuesday, I remember fondly some watermelon rind pickle I ate once  
in Reisterstown fifty years ago but can't remember the actual taste, just the  
pleasure of the Southern Thing, the pleasure the taste gave me at that moment.  
What can be made of me? I am spoons and Mahler (but not the Seventh), I  
dislike green peas and mayonnaise, a numb feeling comes over my pericardial  
region when I think of Spain.

4 August 2007

## CHILDHOOD

I too have been waiting  
under the stairs  
where the cracks over my head  
in the old wood  
look like stars,

a sound of thunder  
when you climb up  
to entertain a stranger  
to shake out a sheet  
from the morning window

a flag surrendering to the whole world.

4 August 2007



PHANTOM PHASE

But did you hear this  
the tender philosophy

of ghost hosta  
that I come again  
to make your garden

Easter Eden when I rise  
lent-flavored from big leaves,

a dabble of reminders,  
a Mozart in blue air?

I cannot claim  
meaning for what I am,  
up to you, sis,  
your sweet brain-pan of courtly mannered  
lady listening,

hear me in charity,

don't you know I only am a telephone,  
old-fashioned, with a place on someone's desk  
or night table,

you could clobber  
a peccant lover  
with me, handset like a dumbbell

and only you are listening.  
There still is gravity to deal with,

sheer avoirdupois  
airy even in our evening world,  
the lamé sunsets lathered over Chelsea,  
honey, the sky itself's for sale,

did you  
say something?  
or as if the cab  
slewed suddenly to take advantage  
of an empty lane

and we were thrown together  
shoulder to shoulder  
o gravity, grace of this fallen world,  
and knew each other



and all the others  
vibrate in my poor spine  
urging me inward to an unknown meadow  
or onward toward  
a girl wrapped in the world.

You never know who you are  
until you hear something,  
one note too many

and what's left  
over from the song is you.

4 August 2007

