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Sumptuous beginnings or roar.
Too long it has not been animal.

So be. And there is the star
Gleaming on the snout of it, tusk
Silvery, the bristle gold. Be.

You only are of everything,
All the listless trees
Sperm-scattered scattering, Beast.

6 October 2007

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Let some other raven
This bone bereft of meat now
Can only sing the way
Smooth white things sing—

All song is sadness
Have you noticed
All things are going
Except things that are gone?

A crow is good enough for me
But am I good enough for him
Perched on an oak to guide me
Find the way that I'm to go.

6 October 2007

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There was somewhere else to be
And then there was me. The rock
Was like a balloon, the port
Was smaller than a door. And yet.
And yet we keep going in and out.
Every city is the same city at heart,
Heart being a variable time of night.
What happens in that brutal quiet
Happens to you. My friend. My lost
Animal. Why did I ever know
Your name? Or learn my own.

7 October 2007

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Trying to recover a quiet hand—
Cause no suffering. Cause
No suffering. C'est tout. See
With morning eye all day long.
Like a Hallmark card or a cute
Commercial on tv. Assassinate
Your dubious desires, consent
To the mediocrity called being
Alive. No one can give you
What you really want but you.
And you're not even listening.

7 October 2007

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When is it my turn? It always is.
Waiting means indifference. The Superior Man
Loves to wait. A queue points only
To a commodity he does not need.

Simplicity is yes. Let other people
Wind the clock. You stay where you are,
Unraveling the clouds. The sky
Is what is permanent. Marry the sky.

7 October 2007

AFTER

Something, asking, and then not, another maybe,
the old one died, they cared a lot, they carried it,
asking again, always like that, all the way,
past the tree, around the corner, asking more
and it still was the way it was, had been all day,
bad, and then over, sometimes they wanted,
just to throw it, where could they, where, where,
something, there's always something, another
maybe, no more maybe, this one again, how they,
how could they, care so much, carried it
to where it would be put to be away from here.

7 October 2007
(for Caspian Dead Dog)

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But I don't know what she's saying
Take a pill that's all you need who
Said I need anything I need anything
You can give me what kind of pill
The one that's shaped like sunshine
And puts your doubts to sleep a knife
It works like a knife it's close
Because you are that's what she
Is trying to tell you why don't I listen
Her voice is too high is a French
Shopkeeper apologizing for bad cheese
But has a weird accent so have I
I have everything but the pill you mean
The pull the push the bird perched
On the empty baby carriage cold
Cotton and the mother's crying.

7 October 2007

MAPLE INTERVIEW

I waited for the color and it came.
But wanted something of me.
What do I have to offer
Scarlet as you. Nothing. Nothing.
I walk empty handed through the autumn
As is my custom all year round
Trying to make my observation count.
Thank you, maple, daylight, ground,
Air, the mediation of one thing
In the courtyard of another. For this
I was born. I live for mess.

7 October 2007

THE ANCESTOR

Do I endorse
The name you sing?
Sarah, mother
Of the final race,

Mother of grace,
Your hands quiet
Flat on the table
Pale while others knead.

The veins of your hand,
The old diamond ring!
Your husband before your husband.
The god before god.

7 October 2007

KAIROS

Rain. After weeks not.
Wet. The suspension
Of which breath itself
Is an interruption.

The gap called being.
And on Mt. Tabor once
One August afternoon
We saw clear an hour

What hides inside
The breath, the untimed
Timeliness who came
To call us into light.

8 October 2007
The Day 1 Cawuk

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Do with this solemn hour what you do
With me. An overture, like an olive,
Shaped already for the lips to understand it.
I mean ears. It's all about religion, isn't it,
When they throw the bottles out at half-past four
And dumpsters reverberate with crash and clang
Like baboons along the Nile welcoming the dawn.
Religion. Sex means it, alcohol itself
Impersonates it, eating your nice breakfast muffin
Is just a sacrament forgotten. Ignore it
As long as you can. Things like that catch up with you.
There are no things like that. Just religion.
We put on clothes to hide it. Have another.
The real music is finally about to begin.

8 October 2007

LOGIA

Whose mountain
Do you assert
This to be?
Philosophy
Begins with studying
“one’s own temperament”
Says Iris Murdoch.
The tree
Contemplates the tree
Endlessly. While we
Interrupt our studies
To explain.
Words dissipate
The little bit of the
Secret we see.
But there are other
Words, other words
That studied me
Before I was
And still can say
What they understood.

So it is a matter of knowing the words— of being able to *recognize, retain* and *put into use* the real words, the ones that are waiting for us almost from the beginning. They are all (mostly) in the dictionary. But no dictionary marks them for what they are. Life and suffering have to point them out, and if we’re wise we’ll leave little checkmarks next to them, faintly, in pencil, so after us some other person might too what we found, and wonder why someone last week or long ago put a little *x* next to (say) ‘sympathy.’

The words I mean are made of glass (which is silica and heat and light) and mercury. These are mirror-words, and they alone can tell us what they see when we look into them by using them, by letting them rattle around in the skull, let them live inside us. And it’s up to us to turn left into right, and turn our own image rightside out, to become as real as what they see. As what they tell us when we speak.

8 October 2007

CHOIR OF ANGLES

It said on the record. Conclusion of Beethoven,
Christ on the Mount of Olives.
Would God would let us hear them,
Acute and obtuse, the radiant isosceles
Pointing to heaven, the glimmer glamour of the scalene
Slipping its toe under her svelte hip.
For this is a world of shapes and shifting,
This is a world of being there and being gone.
And only the angle know itself completely,
Knows its degrees, its destiny, its resolving trines.

8 October 2007

TINES

Truth is a fork.
It has tines.
The points of them
Pierce what you mean.
But in between
There is a shapely
Absence that keeps
The tines apart.
Inside that gap
Something settles
That isn't true
And isn't wrong.
It is all we have
To feed upon.

9 October 2007

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No more disembodied I never understood disembodied
poetics all my life I have tried to embody poetics or be
embodied in a poetics all my life I have tried to be in a
body but it's hard to be in a body what with tigers and
leprosy and gunmen and the government and turning
you into money into prisoner into soldier into a number
without a dream without an arm or a leg or a lip to lick
the taste of you you always you off Christ I need a body
to forget I need to be more in more more in one and
how on earth can I be on earth without a body here this
is my body

9 October 2007

for Elizabeth Robinson's Naropa book inscription project

ROSES

Roses fade fast
Because they're from Persia
Where time is quicker

All those ruins
Built in no time
And so many religions!

Gods wear a place out.

9 October 2007

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A dozed day but rain in it
clirr of it on the leaf fall
cold of it wafted in wárm air
the daylight tamed. Would buy it
if I had that kind of money
and watch it every day set out
to give all men such pleasure.

9 October 2007

CHANGE

A day to think something different.
Why not nothing?
Nothing at all
would be a change.
But change is highly overrated,
change is just short for *che-ga-na-chi*,
birth, age, sickness, death.
So today I'd better
think the same old stuff again,
words, poetry, the permanent
residue of the terrified mind
calmed for an instant
by someone's own breath it speaks.

9 October 2007

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Dark to light.
Danger is.
The wet light
tumult ears.
Years specify
Darwin said
or least is most
all over again.
Hahnemann.
Homeopathy
invented poetry.

9 October 2007

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I dreamt a fly
as if it were the strangest thing.
What was it doing
inside my house

where it had never been,
being so normal and all,
quick watchful easy
as if it belonged there

more than I did,
I was the nervous one,
afraid even. What am I
doing in this place?

10 October 2007

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[section added to Thea Piltzecker's poem "Wings," 3.X.07, in class]

7.

It wanted me to want it,
this flying business, this ascension
which is an assent
to being up there,
even assent to being gone.

We were gone with us
from the night, the porches,
October. No more flies.

[transcribed 10 X 07]