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## ON THE DAY TWELVE TS'I

1. A dangerous day, an infidelity,  
a dog.

Sparrows? Spurious.

A flirtatious critic  
teases me with text.

Over Trabagazanda

a stir of cloud, coming this way on the north wind,  
will be here soon, just forty years ago  
when we summered in the great white wooden hotel.

2. America is built of wood. Frame, plywood, pinewood, cedar,  
trees. Why don't we build with rock —  
is it that we have to kill

something to be comfortable?

Cut down tree, not pick up waiting stone.

3. Help, my morning turns grumpy,  
full of ideas and attitudes,

those two

ugly sisters of sweet Cinderella mind  
who all is thinking, and nothing thought.  
Someday she'll come into her own.  
Her own is now.

17 May 2006

## **By the Flume of Babble**

Every word likes to disguise itself at times. Language is a Venetian carnival, words en travesti, faith coming fourth, truth stretching up and outward as a truss supporting a bridge that thinks itself a bird. Arch over Humber.

17 V 06

=====

If I could go to  
the place  
I would be gone.

But what of the what  
of the place? Place?  
Is there room for a room?

It is hard to keep  
asking when no one  
knows, but someone

has to do it.  
If no one knows  
someone must keep asking.

Otherwise what.  
There's what again.  
Very little will happen.

But very little  
often happens and we  
are still pleased

or nor displeased or  
not less pleased than  
otherwise.

There is a cast  
of characters  
in every question,

mostly zanies and sombrosos  
waiting the smite  
the hero and go home.

17 May 2006 (late)

=====

Some of it recalcitrant some lifted  
or a child would say lofted  
from the ground  
lost in the air  
the way music is when you walk  
away from the song  
sound diminishing they tell us  
by the square of the distance  
what child, what child  
would say the music's lost, what child  
in what summertime lifting  
(because a child  
also knows how to lift)  
a complaint to the mother  
and father of everything  
They did it, they must have  
taken the music away,  
why don't I hear it  
wherever I go, why do your laws  
inhibit the air  
from remembering  
whatever had once inhabited it  
(the child likes  
the overlap of sounds,

everything touches me

a different way, see, my skin

knows how to remember)

why can't the air

say back

whatever someone ever said,

*if you say it you lose it*

my father said

dragging his heels into the dance

I will sing yes

but only from the sidelines

where the real action is

where the pipers and so on stand

almost motionless

making you dance and me sing

and there is an end to it

but the child

has no use for endings

a child is about continuous

like a boat maybe

or anything that goes

because when you go

the child thinks

you are always with it

you go with the going so you're never gone.

18 May 2006

## EYES

When we were walking into each other's eyes. When I was walking into your eyes. And all I know is what I see there. Saw there, that time our eyes got hollow to each other and. And of course we saw. What did you see? I'll tell you if I can what I saw. I saw you. You now and you a little bit before, I saw you dance and saw you sit and saw you doing a lot of remembering. But I saw more, no, I mean there was more of you to see. You tomorrow and the next day and the next, on and on, for several years then for many years. I saw you till you were 54 years old and then I died. Because then I stopped seeing. For a number of years you hadn't changed. Your face grew and had grown firmer, your hair longer, dark then ashed with grey a little, the way things go. Cheekbones. And always your eyes came towards me, eyes walking into eyes.

[18 v 06]



=====

Taken from the other side  
something to believe.

Horns or amber/  
For you to touch  
as a decision-maker  
-- if not does not feel like  
this, don't touch it.

Amber

is the air, caught,  
horn is the evening.  
It is a voice that dreams you  
deeper into what you suppose.  
It is not raining now  
but the woods are still wet,  
girls' voices laughing,  
a man trying to listen but not hear.

18 May 2006

=====

On the other hand there might be a farmer  
able to tell north from war  
and run with his yearlings through the rain  
as once I saw gold-red durocs run  
shivaree in Pennsylvania through red clay mud,  
enough of me and my hogs.

the farmer would be noble, Baltic-minded,  
epical, majestic,

and enough of such, let

the Brahms forest horn call

mean supper too

for all the immigrants

an inner kindness

to spill a destination,

there are people here

who forget the language

no one spoke,

spearmint leaf, female cowbird

greybrown elegant in dusty rain

or then again an arrow

dances its shadow on the cloud

faltering with adhesive love

a moment of paraffin and milk,  
and something snuffed out  
and something still burning

*angry day* and on that day  
something happens to the fire.

19 May 2006

=====

Too many gods

is that who it is

Miriam offering a pineapple

after dinner when she

was alone with all those men,

their eyes on her

as if she herself was the offering

Where does this fruit come from

he asked, and she knew

it was what one dreams about

in the middle of a war

when the bombs are falling

and the terrified camels run

away into the dry hills,

and his war would never end,

from Africa I think, man,

she told him, or from Malaysia,

some merchant brought it,

I don't know what it is

Lord but somewhere it grows.

19 May 2006

## **LIFE**

This life is a weird party I wandered into off the street, I forget which street.  
Now I'm here among strangers, trying to have a good time, getting on with these  
strange people, making myself agreeable, trying to be helpful to our hostess. I  
think I just saw her through a doorway.

19 May 2006

## BELIEF

Quiet certain faith

the way the fur

grows one way

smooth down the wolf's back,

seal back, man scalp,

the quietude of grain.

If you have to believe.

believe that way, the way

the mind fits the world.

### Commentary:

True belief is alertness, "mere" alertness. Where you're awake, everything is there. Here. Things have implicit *direction*. I'm not so sure about seals.

20 May 2006

## VACATION

Move plants out to get them showered on.

Pack a lot of papers and few books.

Summer nomadry is mad.

For everything could be

an ocean right here.

Sparrow soft and tender care,

a wave of grass, a foam of dust,

my mermaid mild at her desk.

20 May 2006

## ANSWERING MACHINE

I want to leave a message  
but what would it say?  
What is the word  
your skin would finally understand?

20 May 2006





=====

Sleep.

Have you found it yet,  
your glad supply,  
tender rapture in a Welsh garden,

speaking in clamshells to your lover's mother,  
o everything is possible under the spruces,

vagrant turpentine from her soft studio.  
Her body takes me by the hand.

20 May 2006

## TREASURE CHEST

Glad be supply

or rest

as kindly for a mother lode—  
who dares to understand me?

Meekness is much –

log in as a beginner  
confident of hills. Confidant,

the road knows you,

the road talks to you

surely

you ascend,

a kind of Ship you are

figure-headed, driven

through a sand of cloud.

This

must be how it began too,

the thingly love

all around you,

hand to the tree and a fruit falls,

name it, name it stolen

like the thought

of another man's wife.

Nothing belongs to you. That is how to begin.

21 May 2006

=====

The drain, the strain of it  
choosing East

always,

remember, a campaign  
against the obvious  
becomes the spectacular,

you have no choice,  
o the conspicuous—  
only the good stuff hides.

21 May 2006

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Honey in your tree  
on me. My, thee.

The conversions  
entrain us – there is one

last God to be considered,  
a name you begin to guess,

a face you've never seen.

21 May 2006