

7-2006

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Freed from

or is it peace of,

one fragment of our loss dissolved  
in all-wine

the *pharmakon*.

The silence in my head keeps growing,  
going,

soon it will get there

wherever it is that silence is heading.

8 July 2006

## THE MARKET OF SILENCE

I sense it from far off like the great domed mosque  
with minarets arising slender from  
the glacial lake plain outside Toledo  
which your reporter spotted once  
with no disposition to stop and pray.

No monument ever made me want to say my prayers,  
in places like cathedrals all the prayers have been said already  
and still are there, no need for me,

a million tons of stone poise graceful in the air.  
What more is there, what other proof do I need?

Whenever you pray you turn slowly into your prayer,  
you turn to stone.

                                  This is dangerous for travelers,  
glaciers and no rain, peace of Westphalia or  
thousand years war, I still have to put  
one thought after another, modest as moss  
or Mozart, and get there waving my checkbook,  
humans as we are, tokens of obsolete economics.

8 July 2006

## EMERGENCY OPERA

Sudden need for music  
makes a man stand out his hand

across the street she hears him  
with the corner of her eye

and all the cars that roll between  
chorus of simple villagers praising Baal

while the two of them seek the one true god  
just where their fascinated eyebeams meet.

10 July 2006

## TEE SHIRT

Yours, printed with a comic poem, can't read,  
the way the words hide among your breasts,  
it's like those paper placemats diners used to have  
What Is Wrong With This Picture?  
How Many Can You Find, well I find plenty,  
I find your shirt, I find your hand  
too far away from mine. I find our knees  
don't meet under the table  
in the great abyss down there where  
lost spoons make love. I find I have been writing  
your initials elaborately on my napkin  
but you are not writing mine. There are so  
many things wrong are there any things right?  
Maybe your eyes. But they make me start  
counting all the things that are wrong again.

10 July 2006

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Not for long to be wrong again  
fan at midnight shakes  
gently the deep orange roses' petals  
their deep green leaves and I am done.

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## ZAKHOR

Ghost of Neanderthaler  
waiting in the shadows of the library.  
Mount Carmel.

The first cave  
was the world itself. Everybody  
lived here first, and they  
are here as specters still.

Sonata structure. Here, gone, here,  
we are the end.

Time itself  
is a construction. Remembering  
is just a walk in the dark.

10 July 2006

## ELEGY FOR TRUTH

Where those lost ones lie  
and where they bathe  
naked in moonlight  
unforgotten

                    as if something happened  
to the rose  
                    and we had to forget  
all it meant to us before

and now it is some common Turkish flower  
found its way here and stayed  
and no one thinks of it in April  
and by August it's already away  
and the thorns dig in

a pain, a pain of its own  
like remembering the Bible  
some special mysterious cruelty in it,  
what happened to the boys who loved Dinah

some metaphor that poisons your whole life

unless like the brazen serpent  
held up in the wilderness  
the venomous image itself  
gazed on profoundly redeems,  
releases us, heals.

Aletheia, teach me to forget,  
for truth has to be forgotten  
into the body  
                    to be really true,

as when we say a thing is so  
so and not otherwise  
the way a bone is

or a madman you spot walking in the street  
truth,



not something you know  
but how you know it,  
know anything at all,

I look at your face, your face  
remembers a mountain.

11 July 2006

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And in this apathy  
a gleam that needs me

I get angry when  
you go out playing with children  
when the Orpheus in you  
screams for his lyre

only the bones of your hand  
can stroke it, calm  
as fingers on a smooth book  
idly caressing,

                  only the lyre-horn laid  
against your breast can  
tune that sound and make  
his, yours, the *most*  
*thoughtful of all music.*

The busiest city is  
a ruined abbey, shadow-birded,  
waiting for your  
insistent call-note.

Have you ever heard the white-  
throated sparrow sing at nightfall?

Just fill the words in and let me hear.

11 July 2006

## THE FAILURES

of what will not fall  
close-fitting rapture  
tongue on your throat skin  
licking up

The truth is coming,

Verity is naked again,  
all the punitive judges excited  
by the tumult of their observations,

ah the senses, those perjured witnesses.

11 July 2006

## REFUGEE FROM THE BIBLE

I am who. Everybody's  
relative.

1.

In my day I watched  
the strange Egyptian prince  
that poet enraptured with the sense of exile,  
afame with resentment,  
in love with outcasts, swarming  
out of Egypt with a host of lepers  
tinkers gypsies convicts chemists  
true believers, the empty places

*give me the empty places Lord  
and I will make them speak*

how could he trust that rabble  
but he did, flattered maybe  
that they trusted him.

2.

He took one god and left all the rest behind,  
maybe he took the one nobody wanted  
back there, the only god with no face,  
no animal stand-in, hardly even a name,  
and you knew he was there  
only when something was on fire.  
His fire caught in you, and you knew.

3.

Was it ever in me?

Was I ever one of them?  
I was born in their encampments  
born into their precious exile  
their darling wilderness

But I was to them as Prince Moses was to Egypt,  
an outcast born, an embarrassment,  
I wanted gods with faces,

faces with lips, gods with hips and breasts,  
with mountains, gods who cast shadows,  
gods I could feel  
in my body, their hands reaching  
down through my arms to become my hands  
  
my hands and all that they could learn to do.

11 July 2006

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In a house lost  
in the woods a man  
an old man play  
a golden harp  
to a deaf woman  
a little younger.  
It is the saddest  
story I ever heard.  
It is heaven.  
All depending.

11 July 2006

## THE LADDER

Tell Jacob I'll take  
the later ladder  
the one I look down  
to see ascending  
and follow no one  
up the rungs to  
*ipse* up there, the thing  
itself not far from here.

11 July 2006

## OUT TO DINNER

I remind a schoolboy that I remain  
a schoolboy waiting for his dinner.

That is, we are both sinners,  
body always focused on the easy

beyond the abstruse appetite for words.

Stop talking, make your mother  
give me something to eat. Silence.

Self in other. The best thing

about kissing is no talking.

The privilege of silence, immense.

A schoolboy stuffs his face  
while reading a story

about another boy in another place

walking through crazy trees

heavy with succulent fruit

o god the smell of them and wanting.

12 July 2006



## AUBADE

No one is entitled to identity.  
Fire engines pass at dawn  
weird to think of fire  
that it can be at work so early.

Bless this food so that  
in eating it I take on properties  
of use to you, construing  
you as plural-universal

like a cup of tea left unfinished  
cool, anti-oxidants enough for all.  
May I always be a glass of water.  
May I always be a chair and table.

May I turn into what you seek.

12 July 2006

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Some one small  
sees me from the trees.  
I was dozing. The woods  
around my house—  
nothing to be seen  
but all of them seeing.  
I wake into observation,  
a part of landscape at last.

12 July 2006

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Trap smoke in a bottle.  
This was Nero's Rome,  
this is Alexandria  
when the books were burned.  
Smoke in a glass,  
the slow precipitate,  
gas is invisible  
something happens to the air.  
Old Rhineland poets  
discovered the middle class —  
for them pretty girls were invented  
and adventure, texts of interest  
only to the stay-at-homes,  
the knights of salient economics  
wrapped in their golden loricas  
read about real trees.  
Deep in the forest also  
sleepy dragons read romances.  
Open the book and the smoke sails out.

12 July 2006