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We live in a democracy of signs—
every image is equal.

It's what we do with it
or let it do to us, with us,
that counts as history or politics or art.

24 IX 06

= = = = =

Or be close to granite. Garnet.
Help me to decide
my own. My arm
lifted a little
to taste the wind.

aliquantulum elata

her voice lifted
just a little
to speak out loud the mystery of what he meant.

Test. The window closed
to trap the light. The door
being spare. Being closed
he stood among them.

Space

around us

feeds on me.

My face. Fears.
The complicated weed outside, a kind
of soft thistle flower
with thousands of seed hairs,

the jagged leaves. Like a branch
from which a cardinal has flown away.

24 September 2006

= = = = =

Things around things –
a sort of measure.

Corn some shucked
some stob some full in the ear.

In the ear. The sound
of time passing.

Understand nothing
it will wait for you

forever. No worry.
The fullness – once

meant foulness –
of the whole sea.

24 September 2006

= = = = =

Things around things around
broken things. Lost rings
in sand. Lost sand
in wind. The wind

knocked out of you.
Nobody loses the you.
There is always a you there,
a miracle, a black-eyed Susan

say or a broken
bicycle in tall grass today
we on the other hand
got lost in a bamboo grove.

24 September 2006

VIS MEDICATRIX

Ravenous blue
the streaks of sapphire light
bundle together
till they mass – one substance:
the sky.

The sky
is spears of light. The trick
is to let them pierce you
one by one till you are healed
by all of them alone.

25 September 2006

= =

This food that fed me

φαρμακον

the lamb
the celery onion garlic
the salt . and water
till it became

a little eon of its own.

Broth. Breath. This food
heal me, this
healing help you, this special lamb
alive again in me

and you will live forever.

25 September 2006

Beati qui lugent

because they know
the world is sorrow

and this knowledge
will console them

when they find
wrapped snug in every pleasure

the dry bone of misery.
And vice versa,

the music says,
the sound of his voice saying so.

25 September 2006

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1.

Watching the sandman saw
the dry old tree where he gets his sand
I keep awake, I know the dreams
already that he'll bring,
each grain of his sawdust –
that's what his sand is,
organic, made by the life before it,
life before mine still alive in me –
each grain a universe of cities
rising and falling never stop talking.
I watch him and I do not yield.

2.

Watching the sandman snore
deep in his own dream
that he can't help breathing in,
I feel the air has settled down,
all the dust blown away the wind falls
and now I can breathe out.

26 September 2006

= = = = =

Inscape, an othering:
to do it
without a single face

to absorb it
without a thing
to do it

shape it same or other
to do it
without itself

to do without it
and do it
anyhow, a face.

27 September 2006

AT OLANA

There were too many flowers
in the narrow garden
meniscus of soil
beneath the reverberating stone wall
in autumn sun
even roses almost October
to have but not to see
never too many to be.

27 September 2006

= = = = =

Loss winder
breath of breaking

—engine. Run.
Run. All
you know how to do

is do. *Satis*
they said, 'full'

or 'enough.'
As in satisfaction.

As in the air
going forever.

28 September 2006

SO MANY ANSWERS TO THE SAME QUESTION

Aguardiente and an island.
Mangrove pod and a dolphin giving.
Rain walking up the street.

For this application you have to *remember* not imagine.
But for the next exercise no memory allowed,
leave it with your pencil and your calculator

back home in another part of the forest. Your cellphone
is all the lies you'll need.
When it rings, the world begins,

the fatal thing, the conversation
with spent uncles and demanding aunts
never stop their causerie. You think

it is afternoon but it's the Antarctic,
from the shadows and shimmer on the ice
it's up to you to make what colors you can.

Because colors really are the truth,
pure percepts in a fog of thought.
How have you gotten so far away?

29 September 2006

FROM A SCHOOLROOM

But what makes it *that* mountain?
I look out over the temple top
(see Scully on Greek replicas in America)
through white pines
thinning out at the top like deodars

but that's no Himalaya over there,
that's Harry or Phil, an ordinary mountain,
Round Top, Overlook, hills
not yet tinged foxy russet
but they will, while ordinary human
hair with time goes the other way,

unfair, *that* mountain? Does it make
it so because I see it when I look?
Then who sees me? Who makes me me?
What gives me the right to be?
Are you asking me, my mountain says,
the world is full of answers, take your pick.

29 September 2006

IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Climb the hill with ordinary feet,
watch out for copperheads.

I lived here once, there is a curtain
on a man's soul, you pulled it back

and let the light in. Then I could sin.

29 September 2006

= = = = =

Top spinning in an empty room
—a child's picture of God.
Which is also God's picture of a child.

29 IX 06

= = = = =

A nation is an army on the land
a people is just people some army controls.

I want there to be countries again
people on the land and cities and no armies

I want there to be countries winding inside countries
from here to the next tree a republic

monarchy of a rain puddle
kingdom of sand.

Every state is a slave state.
Every state depends on making people work for the ones in charge

who do no work at all,
whose activities are limited to war, and imprisonment, and death.

Someday we'll wake up
and pay our taxes only to the peacock or the dragonfly,

the sound of wind in pine trees will collect our dues
and we will learn to hate only those who try to rule.

29 September 2006

= = = = =

If a thing could be other than itself
it would be a torch on a windy night
making the seen world shake and hide
again inside the light itself,
a torch between you and what you want to see.

That would be a thing
the way a thing wants to be.

29 September 2006

= = = = =

Where are our certainties?

Blue diseases, darling,
I had almost forgotten
the wordy Leviticus of your skin.

We belong to our diseases, then.
Mirror-breaking Irish,
noble Normans at the gate
awash with sudden wine.

September: new tiles
fresh from the kiln
blue as heaven.

late September 2006

= = = = =

This is called waiting.

This is called a tree,
cottonwood, most American,
here. A hundred years at least,
centuries, rainstorms, wills,

river, rain. It was this big
when I first came here
a quarter century ago.
Asia is a matter of our hands,
America of will.

This is called waiting. This is called rain.

late September 2006

= = = = =

Woe betide those
who actually see
the pattern of the dance.

Enough to know
(or too much to know)
there *is* a dance

and you are in,
maybe you are it,
and you know your place

to move in
and to stay. Being
is a kind of fate.

late September 2006

= = = = =

The rock wall the chance
of actually being here
anywhere you actually are
and being present to it

exactly like sunshine.
Wind is just another.
A kind of thinking.
Thinking is another.

late September 2006

= = = = =

I want to tell
how it is to be me

without the wanting
though and only

half-hard on the telling
till you (all

by yourself
decide to) know.

late September 2006

= = = = =

Where is the open gate?
Doors fell long ago
but still the wall is open there.
And only there. Now
we call a hole in the wall
a god and pray to it.
Others silently go through.

late September 2006

= = = = =

Do we love by othering?

A speaker appears at the window
says something we don't hear
her shape survives into her words
when she is gone

but those too
pass me by.

Another language then.

A text carved in brownstone,
it always was my house,

my funny alphabet.

Radio.
Anti-Japhetist agitation in Africa.

The purple grass.

late September 2006

BOLÍVAR

Blowing from the east
a mystery loosed on
mountain crystal
I have come from nowhere.

late September 2006

= = = = =

We have no one
but the other.

Like a flag. You look
like a flag today
you are colored like the sky

you are as tall as a steeple
and anything I say
comes right back

and you still are there.

late September 2006