

10-2006

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## DAVAR

It is difficult when things  
don't follow other things but only themselves.  
This difficulty is called a circle.

There are other difficulties—  
the spoon in your hand,  
women kissing the fallen at the bottom of the spine

or the anxiety that comes from not even knowing  
where the bottom of something is  
or how far you go down.

From such difficulties and many more  
we have woven our religions,  
plaiting strands of sound together till they felt

like some thing and meant something  
or (even if at times) meant something else.  
Words set us many a problem

and we take our revenge by thinking.  
Which is a place to which they can scarcely come.  
As if (for example) the Torah.

As if the Torah were an old enameled door  
set into an older tile doorway  
of a house we have not yet altogether entered—

left our luggage outside still.  
We poke our noses in,  
leave out little dog tied to an apple tree,

look around but do not live here yet,  
in this house of which the Words were the door  
but not the walls. In all our lives

we have barely caught a glimpse of the walls.

14 October 2006

= = = = =

**I have to write a letter to the mice in the walls**  
have to persuade them to **behave** in a **different** way  
from other mice, but **where will I send it** or leave it

so they'll find it and read? And **what alphabet**  
**do they use** these days, they who have been with us  
so long, even before the Greeks and long before the rats,

harmless enough but annoying, **like a neighbor's music**  
**unneighborly late**, or junk mail filling the mail box,  
or mildew suddenly triumphant in the garage.

They know I won't hurt them – that's the problem.  
And **they have no fear of litigation**, not much to lose,  
and the **shrill voices of attorneys sound like their own** kind.

So I gave to persuade them to leave my papers alone,  
books, boxes of cookies, interesting labels  
of leaky jars of preserves from Macedonia,

hardly anything a mouse leaves alone. But somehow  
**I have to find a road to them in language**,  
appeal to their ancient nimble consciences

and explaining how the Bible is vaguely against them  
or at least what they do with their teeth,  
and people keep large furry predators in their houses

just to menace or even liquidate the mice. Not me.  
**I'm on their side somehow**. How did I get there?  
Have I been **reading letters from them in my sleep**?

14 October 2006

= = = = =

Those monks  
who say too much  
in so few words!

Give me the old palavers,  
ten thousand words to say no more  
than here I am beside you

and the night is cold.

15 October 2006

= = = = =

Poem: a few words  
to inscribe beneath a snapshot  
(black and whitish, the words signed  
in very white ink, famous people  
always seemed to have white ink to hand  
in the Old Days,  
saying something smart in French.  
Maybe tender. No accent marks.  
Lovers do not need machinery.  
But the photo vanished long ago.

15 October 2006



## GAME

How many mean remarks can you generate on the model of Stravinsky's

"Verdi is the Puccini of music"

keeping to the *X is the Y of Z* pattern?

We call this game "Stravinsky."

16 X 06



= = = = =

Taste of chocolate in a sleeper's mouth,  
Moving the ordinary  
till what I see sees me.

16 October 2006  
(*ars poetica*)

= = = = =

The chimp and Laika the Sputnik dog,  
maybe they are still alive up there,

suffered a sky change,  
need no food. Like Roman emperors

turning into specks of light.  
New gods.

16 October 2006  
(dreamt as such)

= = = = =

Cardinals, those hingemen of the pope,  
slinking scarlet through Roman rain –  
a picture never yet Caravaggio.

17 X 06

= = = = =

But who *was* the miracle  
on the bridge? Pale dress  
white and red. Perfectly  
ordinary middle-class agony  
like 1930s movies about  
torments of decent people  
caught in desire and deceiving.  
Turning away from love  
in noble abnegation, choosing  
lifelong unfulfilment. One day  
you will pronounce her name.

17 October 2006

## TEARJERKERS

And taught us what?  
There are some hills  
you will never climb.

They define your horizon  
which by definition  
is the limit beyond

which there is no you.  
Even if somebody once  
for one day only

brought you there  
they too would turn  
suddenly invisible,

just dirt beneath your feet.

17 October 2006

= = = = =

Tell me the stairs again  
so that I know  
the genders of arrival

wine glass  
smashed on the bride's step  
red thought leaks down

the way to climb,  
every ruin is a sign  
something you waited for all night

counted the hoofbeats  
the space of breath between  
the sincere snores of your companion

as the bed drifted on and on  
towards these irrevocable mornings  
that men have,

the cloud over  
maple tree  
the face in the window.

10 October 2006

## KING ÆDWIN'S SPARROW

Means mirror. Harrow. As:

“Christ goes down to harrow hell.”

Makes it hot for them down there,  
the priest laughed, to wake them up,  
so all who woke up from hell's torpor  
(hell is torpor) could simply walk out  
through the gates with him. Come to.  
Not anywhere special but just come to  
the way a boxer does after a knockout.  
Those three days harrowing hell  
were Buddha's fifty years of teaching.

Fire Sermon. Listen.

Get out of hell.

Get out of the mirror.

18 October 2006

= = = = =

Thorn brake. Not that way.  
Your syntax spills here,  
your drinking horn is dry.

Run, run away from  
the color of your hair.

Run while the eyes  
of the circle are closed

except for one red deer  
watching from the woods.  
They're always watching.  
And they run too.

18 October 2006



= = = = =

I wish some of this would start to answer me.  
Not the human predicament but this  
wet and golden autumn morning after rain  
and before the sun and before the war  
and I'm the only one around who's thinking  
he's awake but might be tragically wrong.  
Answer me. Wake anybody who claims  
to be awake. I am addressing the baroque  
music of the passions, passing cars,  
expressive, authentic and monotonous.  
Everything that lives is on its way to work.  
And still no answer. No wonder I keep talking.

18 October 2006

## ARIA FOR ELIZABETH BRYANT

### *Cavatina:*

Subtle appointment  
we are locked  
higher than a word

earth was read:  
we are all one  
by a glance

There's always a sense  
that the sky  
on this seat  
said things to them.

Things.

About how  
we set out  
several times  
higher than almost.

### *Cabaletta:*

Wherever you are  
we are,  
and there  
turns out to be here

where you see the rocks  
prows towards the town  
sail, we have stood  
in the same place  
in snow and sun

and were different.  
The colors  
really do matter.

Especially that shade  
of autumn rose or mauve  
called 'a child  
asking questions.'

We are stained with it still.

18 October 2006

= = = = =

*“and doesn’t have summary of body”*

—Ava Lehrer

Summa means all of it. All I have to say  
is the body of me saying it.  
My saying is not my opinions.  
Saying is what is on the other side of my opinions,  
a blue woman naked in the woods.

Opinions are shit. Mine especially.  
Maybe like shit they will come to fertilize  
some dry crappy piece of ground.

In me. Always in me. Who is me?  
The Answering Animal,  
that is who I am.

This body you see around me  
is the question.  
You can guess all the rest but I keep on saying it.

18 October 2006