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cold hands snug around
hot tea cup
neon on the old snow.

Kingston
late March 2005

=====

Holy aftermath
a prison for a tune
and a goat to carry it

where am I now
among the high mountains
still hunting for my motivation

all I know of it is that it's blue
it has naked arms
it reaches up towards

stars I long ago stopped believing.

27 March 2005
Boston

PELICAN MUSIC

perched
on old grey wood
railing, Cedar Key
a hundred degrees

and both of us
full of snaky grouper
him raw me fried
and no one but Americans

in sight or hearing
my rented van
baking in the shade
waiting for you.

27 March 2005
Boston

PAGODA

Be my pyramid.
Apple, be my Eve.

Me, be my somebody else.
Else, be my me I mean.

Wait. Tree,
be my river.
Sky, be my stone.

And then the apple
speaks pale
person I will never
have done with thee

there is no me
to be or be done with

you're all alone, the
whole river coiled in your palm.

28 March 2005

RITUAL

Tie your strings
to pine tree branches
lady, let them
imitate the rain

everything
the sky hangs down
quick and cool
film me her face said

gold ring in my pocket
sensible desires,
cosmos, wherewithal.
White horses.

28 March 2005
Boston

L'amour en panne

it said the headline did
we're broke and broken
down at the side of the
road nowhere not even a
cactus in sight or a bird
to perch on it

eagleless snakeless wordless
glum muttering spiritum
animam corpus latin
spells

for love is blind
and has no ears, its teeth
are sharp but hurt a lot

a lot of cavities.
Let's drop some pills
bury the cellphone in red sand
wait for an arbitrary cloud
also going nowhere fast

alternate eagle
or alternative to eagles?
both were heard, got
misunderstood.
There *are* no alternatives.

29 March 2005
Boston

REASONING FROM BEDDOES

There are frontiers thank God
slim steeples in sleepy villages
not a hill for miles
then Makepeace Moor and one dead sheep.

Lamb. When you see a dead animal
at the side of the road
like the dead stag Easter in Ghent
you carry the image several hundred years

deep inside you or till you see
another, we live in this sense
on carrion, are sustained
by mortal glimpses till
Death's doctrine is complete.

We write it down. *How to Die.*

And then they bury us or better
leave us beside the little path
over the steep hill above the Dranse
where lepers used to have their little chapel
and sang for all I know
tuneful recriminations to the moon.

Were these lessons, or lunacies?
Am I leaving or forgetting.

Examine the handwriting of the bird
as it screams its way across the sky,

the lines and loops of it, the shrill
interpretations of alien need,

the quest called *soul* that begs in him
more speed more speed to the vanishing
goal, how steep the sky is,
psychiatrist of emptiness.

29 March 2005
Boston

=====

Unload the horse
across the town line
in Auburn

Be
a blacksmith, baby,
shoe my heart
so it can withstand

the million mile journey
over rough cobbled
roads in winter
from me to you.

29 March 2005
Worcester

*

something trying
to take form

vesicular: swelling
a golden air or breath
as if light coiled inside you or
what that thing might be
that light is the air of

since the Four Elements are found in each,
and each thing serves as each of four
to some other thing,

as music is the air of brass
and brass the earth of fire,

some or some
the slow analysis of candy store
malted milk, girl
with such soft arms
reading *Russki Golos*, smoke
ascending from the smudgy tip
of my Herbert Tareyton
one long time ago in Spain
a Holy Exquisition
sent to scrutinize the smallest.

That is my Magellan, my circumnavigo!

*

To know
the alchemy
of everything

and where to keep it
shelved in my brain

and let the old stone jars
sweat in summer

let them leak
so the balsamic syrup

of special things
will ooze out of the general

and intinct the world
with magic—

that's what I live for,
to save you from same..

*

Now the wind walks.
Now I listen.

I have so many trees and so forest.
Until the end of time my fingers cold with wanting.

30 March 2005

sGrolma

a smile that sinks
inside me
from on high

:on high
is heaven
half an inch
above my head.

30 March 2005

LABRADOR

Things to serve as spirit–

matter twitches with understanding
knowing an owl
hides in every woods

and the woods go on.

flying once from Labrador to New York & drowsing as we flew, watched
the ice blue sheets of it and green tilting towards the half frozen sea
and then the dark green forests, that give way to paler hardwoods in
new leaf, a vast continuous sentence down there, speaking trees, on &
on, & me enjoying the wilderness below when suddenly I recognized
Long Island Sound, Orient Point, my own Paumanok, & knew that all
this, still, is Eastern Woodlands of the textbooks, the woods are still
here, Labrador to Long Island, and here we were still in wilderness,
landing on the outwash plain, Kennedy

Change the psyche of a room
put a man in it
a bassinette a bamboo shoot
grows out of a bowl of pebbles

copper bowl green stones

let the man walk to a door
(let there be door)

and open it and go out,

o god let there be out
somewhere, not just
the everlasting cupboard of our sins

this culture,
this human thing
we huddle in

but when you walk in the woods
all you see are other things
which are the things of the Other,
beasts alive and dead, trees
incontinent arising, impertinent vines
drunkenly ascend their doomed hosts,
the young vampiring the old.

I know. I did it.
I seized all the air in the room
and hauled it into my big chest,
ate all the food, drank
all there was to drink –

the infant does not suck mama alone.

The trees too
are vampires,
they walk
while we sleep.

Only fools have seen trees walk
or blind men suddenly healed,

the trees are vampires
as angels are, the trees
are poemandres, shepherds
of men, they tether us
to their productive shade.

Call this music Labrador

and why it is as it seems,
blue green in April ice—
the more people the more trees—

Appleseed knew that,
the apples core he strewed
were sleeping women who
rose up and bred

Ask and Embla, said our elders,
our eddas, we come from trees,

tethered, true.
In every house
the sacred place
is whatever is
most like a tree,

a closet, say,
wood all round you
snug trunk
round all your hiding

and god knows
we must hide
we children
who have fund the woods
but fear to say
what we found there

the ‘marriages we witnessed in the shade’

(call this music Labrador
the working man
is barren ice
until the angel comes,

pale-eyed young Emma Goldman
pulls him to her narrow bed

for lust is liberal
and sumptuous her intelligence reveals

the ardent world she sees
when she takes her glasses off)

Tree is master
tree is wood
tree is mother
wood is other

opens and takes in
opens to let out
tree is wood
and wood is house

and wood is door

(let there be door).

31 March 2005

AN ALONE

Every child
has an alone.

A child never leaves its alone.

For years it tries to bring the alone
out to meet other children or even people

or more risky still, braver still, bring
other people to visit its alone.

It never works
thank god—

inviolable, ever-virgin
monogamous, monotheist undefiled
the alone is always there

ever waiting.

Though sometimes the child has to go deep in
the shun the din that clamors near the door.

31 March 2005

AN ALONE: 2

I can be noise at your door,

I have seen you subtly slip away
hardly looking back over your shoulder
as you glide into your alone.

Your alone is your terre sainte,
your earthly paradise,

your mother's Victorian parlor
before your mother was.

31 March 2005