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Blanketing the because
with maybe, blonde braid
swings fifty years.

Remember is like that.

Memory is spam
sent wildcat from the past
congests our monitors
our fragile now.

Girls were like that then,
no doubts about their powers
blessedly skin deep.

One perfume she wore was Rain.

15 August 2005

ADVOCACY

Working through what I know – not much –

I find a stone:

Haven't we met before,
haven't we been epic with each other,
mediaeval, lamb fat glisten on our lips?

I fed a stone and it fed me.

Petroleum means Oil of Stone

but not the oil I mean.

You have to die a long time ago

(Carboniferous) to turn diesel.

I'm thinking of you, just you,

a stone that fits my hand, sort of,

the way what we used to call an alligator pear

fits on what we used to call a saucer,

a shape on a slate, a grail, a sacred
confusagon if you take care, look care,
touch care, love in every pore of your skin.

To take it in.

And think of how good I'll be to you
if I can take such good care of a sub-Platonic rock.

15 August 2005

= = = = =

Don't let a body know
you thought this thing
when you should have been
out behind the garage
doing things to wood.

They'll call you lost
in self-regarding, a
Narcissus of the neighborhood.
Be wise quietly, poeta,
a fool says what he thinks.

15 April 2005

= = = = =

somewhere in all that talk
is something somebody means.
For all I know it could be me.

15 VIII 05

WORDS

Words are the flames on invisible candles
socketed safe in another world than ours.

And the word leaps from mouth to mouth
until a meaning ripens in us
and the shadow under the maple seems to have something to tell
me.

15 August 2005

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Thoughts thicken into things
he thought. Then they wither.

Then the things are dead
where they were thrown.

Waiting thought to
think them back to life.

15 August 2005

a history of finger rings

my hands

investigate a

man with a ring on his finger

is the same now as ten thousand years ago

the sad truth

is that we always knew and always know

but spend most of every life forgetting

mother's milk the river Lethe

the sad truth is that my knuckle knows

more of history than Oxford does

it wasn't till I put his gold ring on

that I became this man

that I became the beginning again

16 August 2005

= = = = =

history departments are the last refuge of rationalists
noble characters without a clue
who use their imagination only to vilify one another
in reviews that reveal alone
the poverty of rational analysis.

whereas: as long as you think there's an answer, you don't deserve
the question
as long as you think there's an explanation there is none

history is what happens in your head.

16 August 2005

= = = = =

as if I were the captain
and Whitman's ship had
no need of me and left me
on a tropic Isle
nowhere *America*

and the women of that place
carried the sun for once
not in their faces but their laps
and sundown was a gaudy time
full of mercies and farewells

16 August 2005

SETTING FREE

for P.B.

the stroke of a music
like *Tristan* but tomorrow

I know you meditate
it's hard not to
in the noise world

meditate seems to be
to stand in the *middle*,
be the center of everything
without doing anything about it,

just watch, you and what
you think you see
not different,

taking the measure

they say the word means

or taking hold by mind

which is to do nothing
and knowing so

alert to alertness
answer emptiness with smile,

a smile like that earliest Greek ephebe
smile of someone almost out of the room
but the smile lasts

and the dark
shivers in itself
hearing a lover on the stairs

I know you do.
The meditation:
resists images the way
these marks, these glorious
broken alphabets of Phong Bui
resist words.

And this resistance is like
love isn't it, whose best response
is always to yield 'by a timely
compliance'
yield to what is not said,

forestall the image: welcome it
into the dark.

16 August 2005

= = = = =

smell of the sky
do you feel it
big as an elk
in your backyard

a whistle, sounds
like a whistle,
a goose barking overhead
sometimes the sky.

16 August 2005

= = = = =

all over another again
every time you meet her
she has a different face
a different way of moving
her different body around
no wonder you like this game

lovers bring ostriches onto the subway
lovers challenge rivers to a duel
lovers always lose, loves
famously tear common flowers apart
(*déchirer les fleurs*) in their rage
(a word we borrow from what a wild dog does)

a slamming door is lovers' music
hark! a footfall on the stairs love's sacrament
everybody is on her way already

16 August 2005

BOTANY LESSON

After twenty years the sanseveria flowered
so for three weeks the modest whitish petals
climbed up the stiff stem and gave out a small
sweet fragrance a little off, like lilies,
mostly late in the day or actual evening.
So all these years it had been thinking
of now this little time when it is speaking so quietly
of the one who walked this snakeplant into my life.

16 August 2005

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Exhausted with not being
something finally is.

Being is an exhalation,
not an appropriation.

Being is release.

16 August 2005

COSMOLOGY

First there is water
then air breathes over it
and kindles fire
from which water
(the ash of air)
comes again.

Earth is the other,
the never-given,
the element we had to imagine
as dance floor for all the rest to use.

Earth is the way it is
because we made it
to be slow, to register a doubt,
a hesitation. To bring us down.

16 August 2005

= = = = =

don't try to know too much
or more than you can say.

say it. saying is the road.

16 VIII 05

HODOLOGY

Hearing with your feet
eating with your eyes—

America revived the nomadic wisdom
the stumblebum divinity of the Dreamtime

now at risk of losing it again—
but the cure is always built into the disease,
idiopathy, your big TV
can help you

if you stare at it, most intent,
understanding that it shows
another world, not this one—

and the persons, objects, and images displayed
cannot be found, or bought, or brought home, here,

should not be sought.

So turn it off and out the door,

eat with your eyes

and walk the holy road

you and it made sacred by going nowhere,

the things you dream about

have *already* nourished you—

walk into the ravishment of emptiness.

16 August 2005