

11-2005

## novE2005

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Where is the dark seat where all the crows  
flock around someone seated  
in the likeness of a man?

I have heard them calling far away from there  
and seen them hurrying on business back  
to this ordinary sacred place my lawn

available to sky – just last night  
a gauzy all-but-full pale moonrise  
discovered it. But no crows.

They leave me nights to wonder in.

14 November 2005

=====

The poem breaks in pieces where the painting does  
cause mimicry is common in the beast-souled world  
–adults talk childhood eternal shimmer  
bad words and special words – imitate  
until you learn to walk, then teach running –  
how fools who be? – because I was looking  
at some illustrator imitating Hundertwasser  
imitating Klimt my words broke into dull or  
glitter fragments I quietly swept embarrassed  
together into other words – these – that look  
at first sight as if they make sense, see?

14 November 2005

## ARISTON

1.

Wind waver  
over the dawn breakers  
in Yuca towns  
a splintered island post typhoon.  
Be there with me –  
I too am weatherly divided  
I too have a house  
all down around my ankles  
I too need an arm  
around my hours –  
how be so fussy with your skin  
when everyone has one?

2.

Something counts extra. An elder  
ancestress slicing a tomato –  
who knew such fruit were known in Thule?

But runes knew everything.  
They know brick and seas  
thick with herring, wedge-  
headed elm sticks to gouge  
weird alphabets in Babylon.

We dome from mud. No.  
We come from water and it found  
its way to earth. From heaven  
water came (as it still comes)  
but then all suddenly  
the seas were all at once.

3.

Why water is said to be the best  
it is the highest, and a ball of water  
fell from heaven and was earth  
with all life in it, Anaximander said,  
and here and there grew thick  
and stopped being perfect fluid  
and was land. Moored to the bare  
rock round the hidden fire  
we call earth's Core, a Latin word  
that means the heart.

14 November 2005

=====

Overheard in a French soap: "This  
is my favorite rose, the *Sissi*," I looked  
up quickly, I think the rose I saw  
was fleshy pink, pink as the Empress  
Elisabeth I imagine it was named for  
a hundred years ago, the pretty poet  
some assassin stabbed. The thorn  
I suppose of that lush history  
of which she was the flower. Austria.  
Supposing, imagining, naming.  
What else are we good for, lifting  
dangerous flowers and smiling,  
offering to people we think we love.

14 November 2005

=====

Full moon and rain, the leaves all down, the light is amber and cool though not cold. A shiver runs through it to find me – one of those days when you feel the chill most vividly when you step back into the warm house.

There – that is a whole life,  
an alchemy,  
a new state in the union.

All the pronouns are safe in bed  
stirring in their sleep the way they do  
dreaming they turn into each other

and they do. Out here it's strong and clean,  
not a me for miles.

15 November 2005

## EDDA TOLD ME

*Ein sat hón úti,  
þá er inn aldni kom*

*Lone sat she outside  
then the old one came*

--Voluspa, 28

You sat outside to listen  
the church forbade it  
you sat outside in the night  
just listening

and let the night speak—  
this was magic, and anyone who sat

quiet in the dark was listening  
and anyone who heard

was *volva*, wisewoman,  
the heart hearing

the heart knowing how  
later to speak.



2.

hearing the night

speaking the night

later the hearing

what if speaking

comes before hearing

what if the dark

comes before night?

3.

there might be a weather

but what does she hear?

15 November 2005

=====

Find a word to answer

or bleed

what we mean

the twitch of a thought is marvelous

a new fire spilled out of an old bone

how things are running for a time and a time

and then they forget to move

as if the moon went out without her mirror

and the night couldn't find its way home.

15 November 2005

=====

At last to me let  
the astromeria from Stop-n-Shop  
pretend a fragrant freesia  
I can't smell, blame mé,  
blame a cold I don't have,  
it has the look of a lovely smell  
sensuous and close not like incense  
wafting through a basilica but  
the warm smell of a clean body  
you sense a moment a moment  
when a sweater's pulled off and let fall.

16 November 2005

=====

Cool arrests  
or morning weather  
what a light would be like  
if there were no dark

    a match  
    flaming in the noonday sun

things left.

    things thoroughly things,  
things reading Wittgenstein  
things piled up on a train  
beside a traveler  
who watches a stone church  
arrive and depart

steeple index finger admonition sky

and a slate roof.

Always ready (someone) to understand me  
carnelian cufflink

potato fields of Presque-isle

in early winter

I was not there, I do not have to remember

it is all around me  
even as I speak  
as I fail to speak  
as I sleep, a cuff  
    dangling loose.

16 November 2005

=====

Near to light  
the words seem clear  
but mean no more  
than they do in the dark

\*

Think on it, citizens,  
the sea could hold all of us  
and not overflow. But we,  
what are we for?

What is our function  
in the dark design?

16 November 2005

Rhinebeck

=====

And when we're gone  
what will they say of us?  
A street with no houses.  
A bird with no sky.

16 XI 05

## COOLIDGE CORNER

Could it be obedient to time  
the way a beet is to gravity  
pressure shapes it, earth shapes it,

on Thanksgiving Day agnostic  
Brookline matrons will  
walk in the snow mixed rain

still going to the movies  
old fashioned as it is to  
see anything, to go.

They don't believe  
in the clothes they wear,  
in the movie they will see.

What shapes anyhow  
the way they walk?  
The way we see?

17 November 2005



=====

*for Carl Thayer*

How can there be dead

and then the years that  
know say a man, a man who  
they say is dead now  
a man who

this and that, all the crack  
and consequence  
heroin of what he said he said  
so many working years  
working working years  
so many times made love  
to doesn't matter how many  
and they all count, all the times  
in Paris hotel a Duluth playground  
doesn't matter, doesn't matter  
that we whoever we  
thought we were being  
didn't say what mattered

all the things he did mount up  
one shape among myriads but a shape  
ascending before anyone who lives

as we do all ascend

then how suddenly today a word comes

saying such a one is dead?

17 November 2005

=====

The captain's chairs  
set out on the Elmendorph lawn  
\$85 dollars for four: a tuneless  
  
opportunity. How red the roof  
on the yellow house across the way.  
And David O. Selznick quivering  
leaf shadows on the clean walls,  
  
the actresses of my past appear,  
Jennifer, Veronica,  
a wafture of virtual womanliness  
  
cloud through the oak tree  
still holding its dead leaves.

17 November 2005

Red Hook

=====

Taste of water

reminds me

water is a mineral

*lapis potabilis*

and we must drink it.

We must pay our debt

to the stone kingdom.

17 November 2005

=====

In this town people  
wait around for time---  
time isn't just something  
lying around, time  
isn't always there.  
You wait for it  
the way you wait for the mailman  
or the chocolate brown trucks  
of UPS to come.  
It is no time now.  
The angry-faced woman  
with the Peace sign on her car  
drives away, a swoop of noise  
out of the drugstore parking lot  
fast into her lane but  
she still is waiting.  
Time hasn't happened yet here.  
We're waiting for the waiting  
to begin. Leaf mulch  
under the sidewalk trees.  
Gingko I think. There is no time.

17 November 2005, Rhinebeck

=====

We all have trouble hearing  
but most of us don't have trouble hearing words.  
But there is always something left to be said  
behind what is said  
and how to hear that is hard.  
Hard of hearing.  
So at the seaside you read an English mystery  
set on the seaside and when you get to the end  
you find the last chapter is missing. Now  
you'll never know. But you know  
the criminal must really be the sea.

17 November 2005