

12-2005

## decF2005

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but as if there were horses out there on the snow  
so slow they move I think all night  
they are the shadows of the scattered trees  
mooching up the hill as the full moon turns

a man at the window of a dark house  
on a full moon night looks out and he doesn't  
know what he sees and nobody can guess  
what he thinks he's looking at

black and white world when the world  
is never white and black and now it is  
and all the horses that might be deer  
and certainly are trees move up the hill

just slow enough so he can't see them go  
why do things torture us this way  
and move and dance and never let us know  
and everything whispers in my ear

I am the shadow of some other thing.

17 December 2005

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**stubble** more on the left cheek than the right why?  
handedness happens and makes itself known  
and we poor Americans we live on the left side of the world  
where everything is sinister and fangled new and hard  
two days now falcons have crashed into my window  
and what am I to think? everything is an explanation.

17 December 2005

## LILIES OF THE FIELD

But when they wither  
there is a turn,  
nature that two-faced  
lieutenant turns her back.

Horse hill. Dead cell phone.  
Torn sail. A sick man,  
an old man, a dead man.

And He fled through the voluptuous  
embraces of the night,  
came to himself in the empty dawn and became.

In my little crappy way  
that was my sign too –  
the vacant immensity of the sky over Brooklyn  
in the bleak dawnlight after debauch  
between the seasons, and the el platform  
lifted me higher than Moriah  
into the enlightened air

and I knew my life has a goal  
and I would have to travel all my life  
to reach it and it is right here  
already, only have to live into it,  
the goal that is the road to itself.

17 December 2005

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Watch? Or catch?  
Something waiting,  
something being different.

Wondering is gambling—  
is the seen world  
as is seen, or  
is there another, under  
or just behind?

One way to tell  
look over my shoulder and see  
what is behind me.  
Am I the agent of a foreign power?  
Is there a city or an animal back there,  
a big light behind that  
and I'm just the shadow of what it sees?  
Then you might be that to me.

17 December 2005

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Discover the invention  
that invents a new discovery  
every day. Call it dawn.  
Sell it to me  
wrapped up in words  
and I'll unwrap it  
veil by veil until it's you.

17 December 2005

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But it is another language  
I found it inside the apple  
what could I do but say it  
it sounded like someone beautiful  
speaking Danish, sounded  
like a cormorant screaming  
at a fisherman, sounded  
like a seal asleep on the shore

what could I do but swallow  
everything I heard  
and turn it into numbers,  
numbers and stones, stones  
and scratches on the stones,  
blind men know how we look  
by how we sound, what could I do  
but say everything I could?

17 December 2005



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In twenty minutes the mistral  
clears out the heavy humid soup  
from the south and the valley  
is crisp and cold, the stars  
come back around the moon  
and Christ is born

born again  
here on the Rhone, ancient  
city modern city Christ  
is born wherever Mary travels  
the wife who knows how  
to give birth to her husband  
again and again,

so many  
languages to say that simple fact  
Do not touch me woman  
I am not ready yet, a day will come  
when we will climb  
the ladder made of light  
that stretches into the ordinary sky  
out of any random rock

and do it again and again  
until my blood runs in  
everybody's veins  
everybody's country  
and there is no wind  
that does not know my name.

17 December 2005

## AMONG THE LATER PLATONISTS

1.

And the theologians' convention begins  
we wear our hats  
on the way to the beginning  
but leave them there  
scattered in the talkative wine

2.

I come home bareheaded  
the way you loved me always  
a candle burning in a piece of salt  
I can lick the flame  
and taste the sea we used to own  
and set working to our own purposes,  
exiles, poor children of Eve.

3.

So then Christmas comes close  
again, that confusion of loneliness and love and weather,  
we might as well have kept our hats  
they keep the snow off our eyes  
or shield the book we're reading

from the impartial criticism of the Sun –  
that terrible objectivity  
that loves nobody ever again.

4.

We might as well have gone to Flanders  
and fought some antique war,  
we might as well have been our uncles, our aunts,  
used our hands as windows, peeked  
through our fingers at the king waddling by.  
We might as well have slept in the trees.

5.

Is it here, is it something  
we can taste? No,  
it's just one question after another  
till the snow melts and slides off the roof  
with a great downrushing noise  
we think at first is angels. Then the Russian  
philosophers desert the living room  
leaving their copies of Nietzsche behind  
written in some language not his and not theirs and not mine.

6.

Take this. Taste inside taste –  
hold this word up to your eyes  
and sight along it.

Indians moving through the trees.

The first movie you ever saw  
is just about to begin.

17 December 2005

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Catching cannily  
at sun in the snow  
I need to revise  
my hesitations –  
it is cold where I am, an article  
of faith is like warm underwear  
a woolen credo apt with itch  
yet snuggles you in the world of time  
among the shivering atheists  
you lust for in the wall.

Knowledge was the fruit of one tree  
Desire of the other. In Gnostic shade  
I gobble with both hands.

He said,

and who am I to doubt  
so sure a voice  
especially when it rises from between my ears,  
that vast Antarctic ice sheet  
full of howl and wind-whipped gravel  
from which it's up to me to fashion  
meek secular eternities like these.

18 December 2005

## ERDA

Erda is the alto tone  
or deep entitlement of  
knowledge in the living bone,  
you have to listen  
deep in you to hear her think.

But that is she you hear  
down there, country riddles  
she murmurs till the world is done  
and every time you listen  
one more useless answer  
that almost by accident saves your life—

so that is listening, which  
when they sell it is called music.  
Till then the bone  
is flute and drum, the bone  
is gamelan and lute and horn,  
the bone is that strange sitting dance  
they call an orchestra.

Till then the bone is you.  
All that baroque trumpet glory is reminder  
only, grace notes pirouetting round the sound of you.

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And walk away from what we know  
an acid running through a tube  
that burns some lines in paper  
into what seems – by radiance –  
to inject itself in us –  
parry the blow, the ordinary  
is all there is

until you blink  
like a crow twitching its tail feathers in a tree  
until you blink and everything is changed  
and it changed to changes too

until the acid has inscribed the world  
describing it to itself,  
defiling it with beauty –  
that desperate hope in the socket of the heart.

18 December 2005



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But writing this  
and thinking that  
is all I should be doing –

*chos*

why the guilty feeling  
all my life, always  
that I should be more?

18 XII 05

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If there were pyramid  
whose vertices oriented  
themselves towards  
the five significant stars,  
what would your name be then,  
my darling Aleph Beth?

18 December 2005

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I need the rather,  
the rock.

On Garnet Mountain

I found this nugget

the rough of it

with dull and glint

red and the dark

color under red

I see best when I close my eyes.

The heavy habit

of its being. Of being.

18 December 2005

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**A quick Edda**

for the wife of the man  
in the Moon, I'm sorry  
I keep bothering her  
with absolutes and  
midnight assertions,  
she has hidden from me  
too long, like Lisbon  
in rain, like the Amazon  
rafted by priests.  
Answer this riddle  
or show me your face:  
what does my face look like  
the first time I see yours?

18 December 2005

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I still have seen it,  
the broken glass  
the faded flower

the old witch  
who holds the flickering candle  
doesn't look so old at all now

and the water looks like a green field  
and the deep well leads into the sky

Don't I see the stars down there  
around her little blue lantern?

Hasn't it been calling me all my life?

18 December 2005

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It seems impossible  
to put some things behind me  
why? Third Avenue bar  
in the 50's a juke box  
doing Moon River  
the taste of gin. None of this  
is me, and what a dumb  
thing to keep in mind.  
But all of it is always here.

18 December 2005

## EXAMINE?

A road riding. A goat  
going. We know  
something about knowing.

Put the pieces  
of the flower together  
and read the answer.

It happened to me  
the way night did  
or my eyes tired

from looking all day.

18 December 2005